

A  
PAGEANT  
OF  
ENGLISH POETRY

BY

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*' We'll rejoice with my brother Peter, and his friend, tell tales, or sing  
ballads, or make a catch, or find some harmless sport to content us,  
and pass away a little time without offence to God or man "*

ISAAC WALTON  
(The Compleat Angler)

JAMES NISBET & Co. Ltd.  
22 BERNERS STREET  
LONDON W. 1

PRINTED BY L. MOTI RAM, MANAGER, AT THE MUFID-I-'AM PRESS  
LAHORE, INDIA. AND PUBLISHED BY JAMES NISBET & CO, LTD  
22 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W. 1

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Publishers for *The Voice of Nature* from *The Shorter Poems of Robert Bridges*, the Clarendon Press, Oxford (1931)

Mr. Walter de la Mare for *The Listeners*.

Mr. John Masefield for *The Passing Strange* from *The Collected Poems of John Masefield* published by Messrs William Heinemann Ltd

Mr. Wilfred Meynell and Messrs Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd. for *A Foretelling of the Child's Husband* and *Doisy* by Francis Thompson

Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch for *Alma Mater*.

Messrs Longmans Green & Co., Ltd. for *Shameful Death* and *The Haystack of the Floods* by William Morris.

The author's Executrix and Messrs. Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd. for *The Ballad of Iskander* from *The Collected Poems of James Elroy Flecker*

Messrs Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd. for *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester* from *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke*.

Messrs. Basil Blackwell & Mott Ltd. for *The Garden* from *Oxford Poetry*, 1921. Mr. John Murray for the two poems from *The Diwan of Zeb-un-nissa*

Messrs Elkin Mathews & Marrot Ltd. for *Oxford* from *The Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson*

The author would particularly like to express how invaluable as consultants for his notes have been the work



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

of Professors Camazian and Legouis, and for the modern period the work of Mr. Megroz. For fuller and more exhaustive information these authors should be consulted by all discerning students and teachers

Finally, he must express his grateful thanks to the publishers, Messrs. James Nisbet, for the unceasing attention and courtesy in the matter of negotiating copyright material

ERIC DICKINSON

LAHORE.

*22nd September, 1938.*

## INTRODUCTION

### AN APPROACH TO POETRY

#### I

If we would ever taste the full flavour of English poetry, if we would ever realize the full differences distinguishing one poem from another, if we would ever take delight in seeing, hearing, and knowing something of the verses put before us, we cannot afford to dispense with some little knowledge of the rules governing the making of verses. We must understand that each poem, however short or trifling, is under some sort of control regulating its size, its shape, and its sound, and the business of prosody is to tell us something more about each of these items, for by their proper determination we shall be able to decide what kind of meter a particular poem is written in, and from this, how the effects pleasing or otherwise have been gained. But first, we should understand that a poet does *not* choose a particular meter to write in first of all just for the fun of the thing. The meter that will ultimately ensue after he has written a few lines will have depended entirely upon his particular mood, grave or gay, and the particular feeling that has motivated it.

The unit of measure in English prosody is the *foot*, and a foot is made up of two or three syllables. These syllables are of two kinds—accented and unaccented, and for convenience they are usually indicated by the following symbols:

Long, or accented	—
Short, or unaccented	˘

Syllables in combination give us words, and these words afford us an infinite variety of accent, thus

completely      casual      refer      dreadful

## INTRODUCTION

We see here in these words, that one syllable in each has an accent or stress attached to it. This is known as the *tonic accent* and no word however long can have more than one of these.

We see from the above the variation of position of the tonic accent or stress. A study of this will be found to yield us not one kind of *foot* but several. The most common kinds of feet in English poetry are four, two dissyllabic, and two trisyllabic, thus

<i>Dissyllabic</i>		<i>Trisyllabic</i>	
Iamb	— —	Anapaest	— — —
Trochee	— —	Dactyl	— — —

The iambic measure largely preponderates in English poetry, and various authorities have estimated it as much as five-sixths.

In each of the poems that we shall meet with the following selection we shall find, on an examination, that one of the above feet will predominate, and this ascendancy of a particular foot will give us the name of its basic meter. Let us now quote a few familiar examples to see how things work in practice. Here are two that will be familiar to every English-speaking schoolboy all the world over.

- (a) The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.
- (b) The curfew tolls the knell of parting day  
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

We wish to discover which of our above feet predominate in these two examples, for the answer to such a question will give us the name of its meter.

Firstly, we should treat these words, *working now in combination* exactly in the same way that we treated them when single. We must look for the

## INTRODUCTION

accented or stressed syllable, and having found it, place a little tick over it. The first quotation treated thus should yield this.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold

And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold

Using the symbols we suggested at the beginning, the crescent for the unaccented and the dash for the accented we arrive at this

— — — | — — — | — — — ' — — —

Similarly treating the next quotation we arrive at this.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day

Referring above again to your table of signs you will find (a) possesses — — — and (b) — giving our two quotations as (a) anapaestic, and (b) iambic for their basic meters

In considering the meter of a poem it is never safe to identify less than half-a-dozen lines or so. In the first stages of practice it is best to copy out six or seven lines, leaving a space in between, as room in which to write your symbols of identity, then opposite each line write the number of your full stresses with a note of any intrusion of feet differing from the norm. Finally, divide your feet off by a line drawn vertically at the point of division between the feet. The result should be thus

— — — — — — — —  
The cur | few tolls | the knell | of part | ing day

## POETIC LICENCE

### II

So far we seem to have been following rather an exact science, but this is because just yet, we have made no mention of the use of variants in the making

of verses. Supposing our poems to have been written on the plan of the above examples, and with absolute regularity throughout, then Byron's *Destruction of Sennacherib* and Gray's *Elegy* would have achieved just the one thing most fatal to a poet's success—*complete monotony of sound*. This difficulty has been got over by the institution of a few poetic licences, one of the most important being the *interchange of one kind of foot for another*, a process known as *substitution*. There is one kind of foot which we have not mentioned at present but which is very useful in this connection, namely the *spondee*, having the symbol —, —, for example, *white rose*. Keats has used the substitution of this foot in some of the end lines of his stanzas; in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* with most calculated effect.

The latest dream I ever dreamed  
On the cold hill side  
— — — | — — |

and

Though the sedge is withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing  
— — | — — |

Beyond these licences there is one that plays perhaps the most important part in the development of English narrative poetry—namely the *caesura*, or pause. In narrative verse—Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, Mathew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, to name but two of the most familiar, we have a rhythm that is a musical flow of sound continuous over a lengthy period, approximating at its strongest to what we may call a paragraph unit. Examples of this are best seen in the work of Shakespeare and Milton. The rhythm here will of course depend upon the metrical arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables, but it will depend to an even greater extent upon the *breaks or pauses* dividing it off into phrases of different length. Mark Antony's speech should be examined with this in mind, noticing how the pause is used as an effective aid to eloquence.

The pause is of two kinds, one *final* at the end of a line, and the other *caesural*, having positions *within* the line. If the verse is rhymed the final

pause is unmistakable, but in unrhymed, especially the unrhymed pentameter, *blank verse* it is often lost altogether. The later history of blank verse development sees the breaking down of stopped or final endings, and the increase of usage in the *shifting or moving caesura*, as was discovered by Marlowe and completed by Shakespeare. The varied position of the pause in the line may be seen by a glance at these few examples,

Say, men feed

On songs I sing, | and therefore bask the bees

On my flower's breast | as on a platform broad

Sweet | are the uses of adversity

O, | beware, i' my lord, | of jealousy,

It is the green-eyed monster | which doth mock

The meat it feeds on

There is however one period in the history of English prosody when the pause obeyed a very definite restriction, a period approximating to what is known in books of literature as the *Age of Pope*. The rules of English verse were considered by the experts to have been flagrantly abused. A tightening up process was therefore initiated and the pause, which had been considered to be one of the worst offenders, was only allowed to walk abroad in a straight jacket, and must take nearly a middle path thus

But anxious cares | the pensive nymph oppressed,

And secret passions | laboured in her breast,

Not youthful kings | in battle seized alive,

Not scornful virgins | who their charms survive,

Not ardent lovers | robbed of all their bliss,

Not ancient ladies | when refused a kiss,

Not tyrants fierce | that unrepenting die

We see the pause recurring after the second foot in each line of these heroic couplets, and often Pope will keep this up for many lines in succession. The monotonous swing of hundreds of lines such as these becomes wearisome

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## INTRODUCTION

in the extreme and detracts in no small measure from the charm of his translation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, in which we find the same trick repeated ;

Swift, at the word | the herald speeds along  
The lofty ramparts, | through the martial throng.  
And finds the heroes | bathed in sweat and gore  
Opposed in combat | on the dusty shore

where the goal seems the maintenance of an absolute balance

You have seen here a five foot iambic line (iambic pentameter) rhymed, and referred to usually by its name of *Heroic Couplet* or *Heroic Measure*, perhaps the most frequently used of any English meter for purposes of narrative. But with it we have seen how in the eighteenth century a great victory for monotony was secured. The music of poetry was no longer allowed to trip, or dance, but must walk with a military precision, moving, as a famous critic has put it, with the regularity of '*a High Dutch cloek, or Low Dutch grenadier*'

Yet what may be enthroned in one century may be dethroned in the next, and so it was with the tyrannies set up in the eighteenth century by Bysshe in his *Art of Poetry*, the famous pamphlet which had largely destroyed the opportunities for expression of the infinite variety that is in the natural genius of the English speech. With the coming of Wordsworth and Coleridge English poetry once again recovered the freedom it had known and used to such astonishing purpose in the Age of Shakespeare. Mixed meters, once again, came into use, and particularly, the interchange or substitution of one kind of foot for another, the introduction of anapaests, trochees, spondees into the iambic basic measure, and so on. In addition to this we find copious illustrations of 'the mingling of long and short measures in elegant complexity'. Once again the varied and infinitely melodic harmonies of English verse-music were restored as they had been in the days of Shakespeare and Milton. Milton has given us exquisite examples of mixed metre in *L' Allegro* and *IL Penseroso* where iambic and trochaic feet are mingled irregularly. The *Romantic Revolt* was a reaction against three distinct eighteenth century conventions—diction, meter and subject-matter.

We have so far been mainly discussing the meters of English poetry but we must now turn our attention to another important item, namely, verse patterns, which has to do with length of lines, size of stanzas and so on.

When referring to the word verse it is used in the sense of a line, and the length of a line is determined by the number of feet in it and which may vary from one to eight. These are known under the following names —

Monometer	verse of one foot
Dimeter	verse of two feet
Trimeter	verse of three feet
Tetrameter	verse of four feet
Pentameter	verse of five feet
Hexameter	verse of six feet
Heptameter	verse of seven feet
Octameter	verse of eight feet

This last in our list is very rare and possesses no important illustrations to detain us. Iambic trimeter alternating with iambic tetrameter constitutes one of the simplest measures in English poetry, namely, *Ballad Meter*. The iambic pentameter is known as *Heroic Measure* and in its unrhymed form constitutes the famous *Blank Verse* of literature. The iambic tetrameter whose normal line is of eight syllables in its rhymed form is known as the *Octosyllabic Couplet* and is frequently a favourite measure for longer narrative poems from the fourteenth to the twentieth century. Tennyson's *In Memoriam* is written in the iambic tetrameter, in combination of four verses to a stanza, known as *quatrains*.

When verses are combined in detached groups of varying number of lines to form a shape or pattern this unit of shape is known as a *stanza*. Verse in stanza form may be identified with practically the whole of English lyric poetry and the extent of the stanza may vary from two to sixteen and the verses range in length from one to eight feet. One of the most famous stanzas

## INTRODUCTION

is the Spenserian, named after the poet Spenser, who used a stanza of nine lines consisting of eight heroics followed by an Alexandrine, or line of six feet, in his poem the *Faery Queen*. Byron's *Childe Harold* was also written in this stanza. Four *heroics*, rhyming alternately, as in Gray's *Elegy*, constitute the *Elegiac stanza*. The Sonnet affords another interesting example of pattern. The perfect Italian type—for it is Italian in origin—consists of fourteen decasyllabic lines divided into two unequal groups of eight and six lines known as the *octave* and the *sestet*. Shakespeare ignored the division adhering only to the fourteen lines which he rhymed alternately, concluding with a couplet.

## POETIC ORNAMENT

### IV

"Between the language of prose and the language of poetry there is, in fact, no difference at all—save a difference of poetry, and that is why, so long as there is poetry, there will be poetic diction." Thus has a recent professor of poetry in the University of Oxford attempted to relieve himself of further responsibilities in the matter.\* The truth is poetry is more of an art than prose and is therefore more, if not chiefly, concerned with beauty, for 'art, if it is successful, is judged to be beautiful.' But the essential difference between verse and prose, Professor Lascelles Abercrombie, of Leeds University, has, I think, brought nearest for us when he says 'The plain fact is that patterns of prose-rhythm do not regularly repeat.' But it is upon the first of these observations that I wish to enlarge, though the second should be considered carefully for it affords a clue to a good deal of that vexed problem—the distinction between prose and verse.

If we admit that poetry is more concerned with beauty than prose how is this brought about? It is brought about by the time-worn practice of series of poetic devices or tricks, all mastered to the end of presenting us with the conviction of a sense of beauty. Let us quote a moment from James Elroy Flecker whom you will find among the moderns in this book

---

\* Professor Garrod

What shall we tell you? Tales, marvellous tales  
 Of ships and stars and isles where good men rest,  
 Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales  
 And winds and shadows fall towards the West

And there the world's first huge white-bearded kings  
 In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep  
 And closer round their breasts the ivy clings,  
 Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep

And how beguile us? Death has no repose  
 Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand  
 Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those  
 Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand

If a poet has succeeded in giving us beauty it is more than probable that he has had resource to some of the following aids approximating to a list something like this, which I give as it should be useful in apprehending and appreciating further poems in this book

Imagery, or power of picture-making  
 Metaphor and Simile  
 Symbolism  
 Suggestion  
 Personification and Antithesis  
 Verbal melody and Alliteration  
 The Epithet  
 The Arresting Line, or Stanza

Let us consider the above extract with reference to one or two items from the list and see how they are applicable to enquiry

The first and immediate appeal made to us in the above verses is through their imagery, the power of their pictorial values. The poet loses no time, and the word *marvellous* in the first line more than prepares us for that which follows. We are being treated to an exquisite specimen of what has been called

*the poetry of refuge or escape, the poetry of romantic vision* The best picture of all is surely contained in the middle stanza with its suggestion of brooding mystery, the hint of a forest background in the 'dim glades', and over all the effect of timelessness so powerfully suggested by the picture of the ivy clinging, and 'Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep' So we see, we have discovered two from our list already And we have made another discovery, the power of a single word does not depend for its shade of meaning on its dictionary value but is dependent upon the words that surround it for the delight it gives, and particularly its power of suggestion\*

To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow  
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
 To the last syllable of recorded time;  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death

"Shakespeare's lines are commonplace prose, but they are magnificent poetry We know that in all the English utter the real content of their words is not the things they describe and define, but in the indescribable and indefinable things they suggest"\*

This art of suggestion and picture-making power is one of the strongest inheritances in the history of English poetic development from Chaucer to to-day, and among its chief ornaments The application of the above you will find worked out with further detail in the essay that follows on "*The Making of Poetry*," and some one or two from the list I have offered you will find present in every poem you encounter throughout this book

### THE MAKING OF POETRY

"*Poetry at its strongest destroys this world to create a new*" Thus Mr Laurence Binyon in a definition that I think explains what must be for him at any rate the most essential function of poetic content at its strongest In

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\* Comedy John Palmer (Martin Becker)

these observations my principal aim will be to examine just how such a process works in practice. You will perhaps be good enough to accompany me behind the scenes in order that we may discover a little how our friend the poet gets his effects and puts them over the footlights.

I am sure in English poetry there are many who prefer a Popeian rhythm, and a content of what Bishop Hurd called, "good sense," mixed with moral precept.

Will you now encourage yourselves a little to forsake this mental attitude and join with me in entering new worlds of the poetic firmament? I have a little poem that may help us on a good deal.

I love all beauteous things,  
I seek and adore them,  
God hath no better praise,  
And man in his hasty days  
Is honoured for them

I too will something make  
And joy in the making,  
Altho' to-morrow it seem  
Like the empty words of a dream  
Remembered in waking

That is a very short poem indeed but I think it is a very appealing one. But just what is the nature of its appeal? Firstly, there is nothing incomprehensible in it, and it reawakens an experience common to all, and so at once captures our sympathy and attention. But how did it get expressed in this way, what process did it undergo in the making? I will try to answer that if I can. It seems to me that two very vital processes have taken place, namely impulse and inspiration and both occasioned by a particular quality of intensity in the emotional experience, a kind of white heat or flame that distinguishes the poet, as compared with the dull red flame, that may be the emotional register achieved by the ordinary individual. Impulse is the motive force and inspiration its quality in feeling or idea. Without inspired impulse

that purest type of poetry, *lyric*, cannot be produced. Impulse to joyous movement finds expression in the dance: did not the daughters of the Pandavas dance the dance of the cosmic rhythm in front of Shiva's shrine to the timebeat of the waves? Impulse to joyous sound finds expression in the song. Anyone who has heard, in Kashmir, that haunting song of the rice-tenders, just as the declining sun lengthens the chenar shadow across the emerald fields, a song voiced in unison by groups of young men and boys as they bend low over the green blades will know what I mean. Suddenly, without warning, it seems to awake, and arise, and steal with a caress across the emerald grasses to the feet of the mountains. Such surely are the impulses that spring from joy and exultation.

Is it not something of these qualities that we find in "I love all beautiful things?" Does not joy in this world of sense, joy lifted to the pitch of exultation, supply the impulse, the impulse to sing? The song is the vehicle to which inspiration leashes thought and control. The result is idea transformed into rhythm without discord and which we have come to term a poem, or 'elevated expression of elevated thought'. And what in this case is the elevated thought? Knowledge of the beauty about us, which is always with us, and which so many of us fail to see, and the making of more beauty—*and joy in the making*?

One of the great features in this little poem is its simplicity, which connotes sincerity. One of the tests for great poetry is sincerity and it is a quality never absent from the verse of the late poet-laureate, and frequently may claim affinities with even this

When the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast,  
And everything else is still

William Blake had perhaps not too much 'good sense' but a good deal of divine nonsense that would have considerably annoyed Mr Addison. Simplicity was an element insisted on by Matthew Arnold for all who would subscribe to his 'Grand Style'. But this simplicity has obvious pitfalls, and Wordsworth was not self-critic enough to escape them all.

I have said that the experience we here find expressed, appeals to us because it is an experience that must be common to many of us—how is it then that we differ so from the poet? The difference is that the poet feels three or four times as intensely, and sees three or four times as clearly. We may liken him to a sensitive stringed instrument waiting the moment when the touch of that great master—Experience—shall cause him to vibrate to articulate music. The master comes of course to all of us in turn, but we are only the inferior instruments and respond but ill to the ideas and truths that he would have us tell to others for their uplifting and betterment. It is only when he comes upon the poet that he finds the convenient material for the shaping of great prophets and great teachers. It is this idea of the poet that I would have you keep constantly before you as you follow me in these remarks, and as later you follow this book.

The title I have chosen above is '*The Making of Poetry*'. But, so far, I fancy that I may reasonably be accused of writing on the subject in far too general terms. It is time therefore that I turned to more concrete illustrations and invited you into the poetic workshop itself. A workshop that happens to be conveniently available is that of William Wordsworth. The English lake district of course supplied Wordsworth with most of his material, and there is a wickedly amusing cartoon of Mr. Max Beerbohm depicting William interviewing a little girl, possibly the cartoonist's idea of Lucy Grey, in a shower of rain. Each party seems to have some difficulty in appreciating the other's point of view. William wishes to elicit further details of the little girl's life, doubtless for a poem he is contemplating, and the results of which we know so well. Beyond exhibiting profound bewilderment Lucy does not appear to respond at all to the poet's blandishments. Sometimes however William found his subject without having to take a long walk, or talk to little girls. There is the case of the '*Solitary Reaper*'. Recollect this stanza a moment:

Behold her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland lass!  
Reaping and swinging by herself,  
Stop here, or gently pass!



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Behold her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland lass!  
Reaping and swinging by herself,  
Stop here, or gently pass!

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
 And sings a melancholy strain;  
 O listen, for the vale profound  
 Is overflowing with the sound

This bears the quality of inspiration. But what excited it? It was brought into being simply from Wordsworth's reading. He had been looking into a book on a journey in the Highlands, and a page had sent him musing. What particularly had haunted him had been the rhythm of the concluding words of a paragraph. Almost before he was aware he had written a poem to which those phrases supplied the key. Sometimes it may be from a walk, sometimes it may be from a book or painting, frequently it is from some experience simple or trivial in itself but of vital significance to the highly developed sensibility of the poet, so vital because the impulse once started, the moment of inspiration and creation follows.

Wordsworth's theory about the right moment for creative composition is interesting. He held the principle as some of you no doubt are aware, that the right moment for composition was not at the time of receiving the impulse. He suggested that the moment might be too turbulent that the necessary control for a perfect guiding of the impression could not arrive until tranquility ensued. "*Emission recollected in tranquillity*" was the phrase he used to express this principle. But although Wordsworth laid down this dictum for his own guidance don't imagine that all poets follow it, or that he always followed it himself.

There is however one famous example of the application of this method by Wordsworth and perhaps also it is familiar to many of you—it is the poem on the old leechgatherer. There is plenty of data for telling us how this was composed. In the diary of his sister Dorothy we learn that the image of an old man met at dusk was kept in the poet's mind for a year and a half. And yet how intensely he had come to live in the poet's imagination we can best see by comparing the entry in Dorothy's journal with the poem. William made this feature of dwelling upon a thing until it is ripe for delivery is a thing shared in common by Tennyson, whose lyrics were often generated by one single phrase which he had rolled about in his mind.

Now if we explore a little further and see the poet at work with a few of his instruments and effects, a few of the difficulties, at least, should be cleared away, and we should be able to follow him with our applause, for it is for this reason mainly that I trouble you with this enquiry into the making of poetry

For purposes of exposition I have now to bring to your notice a poem whose remoteness from anyone in the early nineteenth century, unless it were Keats, must be fairly obvious. It is a poem whose appeal for a Western audience lies largely in its suggestion of the East as a place of colour, mystery, and romance, an idea that many of the English have lost, but the French have managed to retain, because we are a little inclined to see the East through the eyes of a United Service Club, while the French see it by way of Chateaubriand and Pierre Loti. Today if anyone takes the trouble to go up to Srinagar and listen to the Khans as they talk, still he may hear of the precious stuffs they bring in from Central Asia down through the passes, of those who make the journey to Bokhara, to Yarkand and Samarkand. But who is there to tell the tale to you? None as this young poet tells it, and whose voice is now for ever hushed and still. Here are again those same verses you have heard before and they will not suffer by repetition.

What shall we tell you? Tales, marvellous tales  
Of ships and stars and isles where good men rest  
Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales,  
And winds and shadows fall towards the West

And there the world's first huge white-bearded kings  
In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep,  
And closer round their breasts the ivy-clings  
Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep

And how beguile you? Death has no repose  
Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand  
Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those  
Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand

What is the effect we have got there and what are the means that produce

it? There is I think no doubt that pictorial content makes the first and immediate appeal. How is this picture impression conveyed? The word *marvellous* in the first line serves as the key setting to what follows; it is as it were a background. Ships, stars, and isles, in the next line, give a beautiful and arresting pictorial content, while the next two lines round the whole conception off with fairy-like magic. But it is the next stanza that is the most beautiful of all: the picture of the 'huge white-bearded kings' in their setting of 'dim glades'. Now there is one particular feature I wish you to notice and that is that none of these words taken at their purely dictionary value have anything extraordinary about them. For example, the word *huge* applied to a box would mean very little but applied where it is does it not serve to endow the white-bearded kings with a halo of mysterious power? They are big with the stature of the first men in history, they have known the triumphs of keen physical prowess in their time, they have been vested with more than normal human gifts, and all this is to assist in conveying the image of their present helplessness; for are they not fast asleep, while round about their breasts the ivy clings? Again note how by suggestion we know how sound they sleep, since the ivy furrows a path over their bodies, 'slow, and red and deep.'

Do you now perceive how words begin to take on new values far beyond their intrinsic dictionary worth, through powers of association and suggestion? Dictionaries and synonyms help us little more in these stanzas than they can help in

Not poppy, nor mandragora  
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world

to win the wonder that is there.

- Take only the word *king* as another example of what I wish to illustrate: its singular and plural forms it has tremendous associative values in  
\* in power, as in such contexts as these:

One day I would be glad  
With crowned vermilion kings  
scarves are flies blowing  
youth for ever sings.

Or

Such beauty is the magic of old kings  
Who webbed enchantments on the bowls of night

and our former quotation

And there the world's first huge white-bearded kings

It is a word to conjure the most fragrant fancies In the first quotation above it has been used to serve as a symbol of the power of triumphant and everlasting joy

Once, that unhappy French genius, Paul Verlaine, said, 'It is the successful blending of the undefined and the definite in words that constitutes the triumph of the poet's art' That, probably, is an idea entirely foreign to you. I am now possibly inviting you to new attitudes, and they have no doubt the disadvantage of breaking through habit Said, Monsieur Anatole France, defending the symbolist movement in his country 'The prosody of Boileau and the classics is dead Why should the prosody of Victor Hugo and the romantics be eternal? Scarcely any one, that I can see, save the old lions of 1830, if there are any left, lament what is happening in poetry today'

I do not expect you to understand what Verlaine meant unless I try to make it a little plainer There is a lync of Tennyson that always seems to me to carry out this idea very happily I will be satisfied by quoting just four lines:

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white,  
Now waves the cypress in the palace walk  
Now winks the gold-fin in the porphyry font  
The firefly wakens waken thou with me

Tennyson in just four lines has laid out for us a perfect garden of richness How has it been done? It has been done with the assistance of about seven words crimson, white, cypress, palace, porphyry and font Tennyson suggests but does not name I wish you could be absolutely convinced that it is this fact that constitutes the real difference between the function of words in poetry

and in prose. In prose they *state*, in poetry they *suggest*. It is essentially the poet's business to give impressions and not facts. Here is Macaulay at work :

How sweet it is at that enchanting hour  
When earth is fresh with April's sunny shower,  
To wander through some green and quiet lane  
O'erhung with briars and wild flowers moist with rain

which is something different from the present poet-laureate's,

I have seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hills  
Coming in solemn beauty like slow old tunes of Spain

One is a poet, the other a careful and literary observer of Nature.

From these examples—the word “solemn” for instance in the above—you no doubt have perceived that the chief instrument of suggestion is the *epithet*. A great deal of responsible literature has been written about the power of the epithet, and notably in one or two pamphlets of the English Association.

For many years I suppose teachers have informed their students that Wordsworth's landscapes are very fine and left it at that. Yet word-painting is one of the chief delights the poet finds in the making of his poetry as most of you must acknowledge if you can recollect Keats' *Eve of St Agnes*. For me one of the most beautifully vivid word pictures is this of Robert Louis Stevenson. It is called *The House Beautiful*.

#### THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

A naked house, a naked moor,  
A shivering pool beside the door,  
A garden bare of flowers and fruit  
And poplars at the garden foot  
Such is the place that I live in  
Bleak without and bare within

Yet shall your ragged moor receive  
 The incomparable pomp of eve,  
 And the cold glones of the dawn  
 Behind your shivering trees be drawn;  
 And when the wind from place to place  
 Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase  
 Your garden gleams and gleams again,  
 With leaping sun, with glancing rain  
 Here shall the wizard moon ascend  
 The heavens, in the crimson end  
 Of days' declining splendour here  
 The army of the stars appear  
 The neighbour hollows dry or wet,  
 Spring shall with tender flowers beset,  
 And oft the morning muser see  
 Larks rising from the broomy lea,  
 And every fairy wheel and thread  
 Of cobweb dew-bediamonded  
 When daisies go, shall winter time  
 Silver the simple grass with rime  
 And when snow-bright the moor expands,  
 How shall your children clap your hands!  
 To make this earth our heritage,  
 A cheerful and changeful page,  
 God's bright and intricate device  
 Of days and seasons doth suffice

There are many beauties there that I have no time to dwell on though I would greatly love to. But you yourselves go through this poem of Stevenson sometime carefully and pick out the epithets in it that have most claim to success. Notice particularly how the poet has expended all the cunning of the descriptive art upon a scene that for him is entirely satisfying without the intrusion of a single personal element. Above all, who can deny the direct appeal of its freshness and colour? The love of the open air, the loveliness that may be found in the seasons at all times is there pure and without stint



## INTRODUCTION

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But in this business of the making of poetry there are still other devices the poet must be constantly using if he would contribute to our pleasure and delight. Two at any rate must be quite familiar to you—*metaphor* and *simile*. Do you not think Robert Burns has managed one of them very well in this?

O my Love's like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June:  
O my Love's like the melodie  
That's sweetly played in tune

Here is *simile*, if *simile* means to compare one thing with another in order to bring clearer a conception of the original image to one. Note the assistance of colour is again very pleasing.

If *metaphor* is to name one thing by another, to render the former more alive and vivid to one's vision, surely one of the most matchless ever penned was Keats' 'bright star,' 'Nature's patient sleepless Eremité'. Or if you wish to be gripped at once by the force of some dramatic truth, Walter Savage Landor, a much-neglected poet, can offer this

I warmed both hands before the fire of life  
It sinks and I am ready to depart

But if you should think these no better than newfangled notions, Sir Walter Raleigh is no whist behind

Passions are likened best to floods and streams,  
The shallows murmur, but the deeps are dumb

And is not that a very perfect simile?

The added intensity and power which the poet gains by the skilful and just use of such devices as these is, I think, clear. Here we behold again the practice not so much of the letter as the spirit. 'The letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life' is one of the most pregnant of biblical aphorisms.

Even today we have not quite forgotten these little things. of humorous metaphor it would be difficult to better Mr Chesterton's 'tattered outlaw of the

earth' for that stalwart quadruped the donkey. What again of the charm we so often find in our today's Wordsworth, Mr W H Davies?

A falling star.  
It was a tear of pure delight  
Run down the face of Heaven this happy night

That betrays no falling off I think. These are the things I would ask you to look out for in your poetry studies, and to beg your teachers to reveal to you. Poetry that has been mixed with these ingredients is bound to compel our admiration and delight—something of these are the beauties to put about us, since they give us glimpses of that infinite variety in the wealth of life which God certainly intended for us, and which dictionaries and zealous study of word-meanings will never put in a thousand years.

But the poet's resources are not even yet exhausted. There are two further aids which I cannot pass over without making some mention—the employment of personification and antithesis.

In this art of *personification*, with just three lines of bewildering beauty Mr W H Davies can accomplish this for us

I turned my head and saw the wind  
Dragging the corn by her golden hair  
Into a dark lonely wood

As for *antithesis*, old person Herick knew well what he was about when he wrote

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,  
Old time is still a-flying  
And this same flower that smiles to-day  
To-morrow will be dying

Before my observations come to their close I have to revert back once again to that cryptic remark of Mr Laurence Binyon, for I do not feel I have yet sufficiently laboured its significance.

He said, you remember that '*poetry at its strongest destroys this world to create a new*' I wonder if any of you can recollect in your poetry readings any poem completely subscribing to such an idea. Well, I think there are two poems that must be known to you—*The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*—poems of magic indeed if any are. Coleridge with a marvellous mastery has drawn us away from the things of this world to somewhere that is infinitely more strange than any fairyland we could have dreamed. Combined with a marvellous descriptive power is a music every whit as effortless. Of *The Ancient Mariner* says Professor Quiller-Couch, 'Its words do not cumber it, exquisite words come to it but it uses and straightway forgets them not Shakespeare himself, unless by snatches, so sublimated the lyrical tongue, or obtained effects so magneal by the barest necessary means'\*,

The same might be said of *Kubla Khan*. You remember

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea

Here transportation many many leagues away to things immeasurably remote and mysterious is at once accomplished by the names *Xanadu*, *Kubla Khan*, and *Alph*, while the whole effect is rounded off by *sacred river*, *caverns*, *measureless* and *sunless* sea. What a piece of magic vision is thus conjured up a wave of the wand and Dame Mystery has been lured from her incommunicable haunts at the command of the magician\* what an unerring rightness too has led Coleridge to the word *sunless*! Here is success achieved far beyond the *Lady of Shalott* because the images in that poem are too clear, too Pre-Raphaelite, there is not enough mystery, enough atmosphere

Among Coleridge's successors I do not think there are any today except Mr W. B. Yeats, Mr de la Mare and the late James Elroy Flecker

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\*See also for a remarkable study in the making of poetry, Professor Lowe's *The Road to Xanadu*, in which he plays the part of a superleuth, to track down Coleridge's sources and illustrate the reactions upon so astonishing a mind

One more world there is however that I must tell you a little of, the world of Pan, and of his rout of fauns and satyrs. The wealth of beauty that has been woven by English poets out of the Greek and Roman mythologies is remarkable. *The Faun in Literature* might well supply a happy subject for a student's thesis covering the periods from Spenser and Ben Jonson onwards. English poetry has perhaps never been made so rich as when the aid of the 'Great God Pan' has been besought, or of Bacchus and his 'charmed pards.' But for him Mrs Browning had not made this:

What was he doing, the Great God Pan,  
Down in the reeds by the river?  
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,  
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,  
And breaking the golden lilies afloat  
With the dragon-fly on the river

nor John Keats this

Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye,  
So many, and so many, and such glee?  
Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left  
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?

about which Wordsworth could only say that it was a pretty piece of paganism. Nor had Mathew Arnold seen

Old Silenus  
Come, lolling in the sunshine  
From the dewy forest-coverts  
Thus way at noon  
Sitting by me, while his Fauns  
Down at the water-side  
Sprinkled and smothered  
His dropping garland

And now lastly I would write of that class of poetry which is made chiefly with the intention of appealing to the ear of its audience. One, among

Such was something of the music that took Victorian England, the world of the sixties, by storm, and made men gasp. Says Professor Quiller-Couch in an eloquent tribute: 'Here was a man who, five hundred years after Chaucer, in the long line of descent which already boasted Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, Tennyson, Browning all so great and so different—had suddenly discovered a new door and thrust it open upon what seemed endless vistas of beauty. Here was a man who, coming after these mighty inventors, could take the language in which they had wrought and convert it to a music as unlike any of theirs, as absolutely fresh and original, as it was patently the music of a peer.'

'The music of a peer,' he tells us. It is that which I wish you to recognize, for if you read this without having forsaken your eighteenth century attitude, this very modest endeavour of mine to bring to you a knowledge of something of the making of poetry will have been vain indeed. At least these verses perhaps will have shewn you how necessary it is occasionally to have some of our poetry read to us aloud, for this is by far the best way to provide ourselves ear-training. There has been here too at work yet one further instrument from the poet's workshop—*alliteration*. Used by Swinburne it is used with consummate skill. But do not think that he was the first alliterative poet, for the history of English poetry will tell you something quite different.

And now to conclude. A little perhaps you have been taken towards the inner shrine of the temple, a little you have glimpsed the inner mysteries, and to which in the ancient world one dared not presume. Perhaps a little some of you may have come to realize that this affair of poets and poetry-making is not a business alone of examination: a little perhaps you have understood that pregnant phrase—*The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life*. A little you will have come to realize that if any should continue to give you the *letter* and reject the *Spirit* he ought to be held guilty of a most criminal piece of cheating because he shall have sent you away knowing much no doubt by heart but knowing less by means of love and understanding, which is to say that you shall have been denied your birthright and sent away in ignorance.

Is it for us teachers to take unto ourselves the exclusiveness of the priests of old? Is it for us to debar any from being present with us when we celebrate the *mantras* within the temple courts? Is our word to go as unchallenged as that of a Chaldean seer, or one of Kenya's witch-doctors of to-day? By no means, for we are no longer in the nineteenth century when these matters for the most part seemed to be reserved for the priests alone. Then it was only for the few to question into cause and effect, to ask reasons for this being beautiful and that ugly, only the few were permitted an educated taste. And yet if each one of us have not something of such an equipment the sum of our experience must remain as nil. From day to day we shall let time slip by, with one day just as another day, in deadly recurring monotony: we shall be but as broken receivers for the messages of God: truth will be unknown to us, for truth exists in experience alone, and we shall none of us be fit for the reception of experience. What watchword then must we adopt? I think—*to be awake!*\* An influential London daily journal had this recently, "The more our boys and girls write verses, the better qualified will they be to know their own inadequacy and monumental achievement." In other words, he, who desires the perfume of the incense must burn the incense.

If it is the business of everybody to write prose composition in order better to understand prose, as much also is it his business to practise a little verse-making for the better appreciation of poets and poetry.

When poets die we pay them all honour: but isn't it fairer to give them a little honour while they are here among us? Although the French poet Baudelaire guaranteed to produce poets after the prospective candidates had completed a special course of exercises designed by himself, I have not heard that his success was of a kind to encourage anyone else in the attempt.

Through the medium of your societies, of better-class college magazines, better-class papers, encourage taste, promote ideas, stimulate those among you who have beautiful thoughts to give them utterance in beautiful language. This must ever remain impossible of achievement until you regard your studies in literature as also a thing apart from any examination purpose. It

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\* Which means much the same as that advice contained in the two words at the entrance to the Delphian temple of Apollo: *Know thyself.*



should be your portion of this task to help your teachers in their efforts of assisting you in the business of recognition of the marvels about you, in their efforts at quickening your apprehensions and perceptions, and all to the end of rendering you fit to absorb your experiences when they touch you. Never should you allow yourselves to be negatived by any regimented education, and the road along which I would have you accompany them should help much to avoid it. In your approach to poetry you should wish to arrive at no other goal than the goal of '*enchanted seeing*' through the knowledge of *enchanted making*.

## THE HISTORIC GENESIS

## I

*Anglo-Saxon*

For a true evaluation of English poetry by the student a brief survey of the beginnings is essential.

It should be recognized that English poetry is fed from two main founts, the Anglo-Saxon and the Anglo-French. In order that the student may better apprehend this let him a moment consider it in the form of the following table:

ANGLO-SAXON			ANGLO-FRENCH	
	Narrative	Elegiac	Narrative (French)	Lyric (Provençal)
Form	Rhymeless, syllables unfixed, accent, alliteration	The same, with addition of refrain	Meter and Rhyme, Vocabulary Latinized	Rhyme and Stanza
Content	Sea-roving, Battle, Heroic subjects, Christianity	Reflective sentiment, Vanity of life, Regret of things past	Matters of Britain, France, Rome the Great	Love, the seasons, Political songs, Religious songs.

It should at once be clear from the above that in one particular Anglo-Saxon poetry differs fundamentally from modern—in meter, secondly that it possesses no lyric poetry, in our modern sense of the term

In Anglo-Saxon poetry every line is cut into two half lines by a pause. Each line (verse) has four stressed or accented syllables. The half-verses are linked together by alliteration, and the two accented syllables of the first half, and one of the accented syllables of the second half begin with the same consonant, thus

leoht and lif somod lof se gewyrcth,  
 ha fath under heofanum heahfaestre dom

Both light and life who lives for honour  
 Hath steadfast glory under the stars

After Langland, the true comprehension of the value of alliteration as a most powerful aid to the versifiers' art was not recognized until Swinburne, and in him we find present two of the main elements of the Anglo-Saxon tradition—alliteration and the sea

There was one other great characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, and one that was organic to the very language—the composite word. The Anglo-Saxons called a grave—*death-chamber*, while for the sea we find this interesting variation

Whet upon the *whale-way* irresistibly my heart.

For the Anglo-Saxons the sea has become as natural an element as the dry land, and passion for the sea and sea-roving sets the colour and the tone to the greater portion of their literature. That it is ever to remain part of the great heritage of the English people, we can grasp more fully, when today we look at the work of Tennyson, Swinburne, Mr Kipling, and Mr Masfield

But no survey of Anglo-Saxon poetry, however brief, could be complete without reference to the decided note of melancholy pervading the elegiac portion of their poetry. The note of reflective sentiment, "the sense of the

vanity of life, and melancholy regret for departed glories," is not met again in such strength until the Osmanic poetry of the nineteenth century, when we have displayed what has been called "the Celtic spirit". Our best examples in Anglo-Saxon poetry are *Widsith*, who finds comfort for his sorrow in recovering the memories of past sorrows, *Deor's Lament*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Runn*, *The Wife's Complaint*—all antique in verse but modern in effect.

Two brief extracts will do more to keep the above in memory than pages of discussion. The first I will use is a translation of a few lines of *The Wanderer*. Here we are shown in the lament of the young the oppressed with sadness and grief because of the lord who is absent and the bitterness of exile.

And it seemeth to him in spirit, that he seeth his man-lord,  
 Clippeth him and kisseth him, on his knee he layeth  
 Hands and head alike, as when he from hour to hour,  
 Erewhile, in the older days, did enjoy the gift-stool  
 When the friendless man forthwith doth awaken,  
 And he sees before him only fallow waves,  
 And sea-birds a-bathing, broadening out their plumes,  
 Falling aleet and snow sifted through the hall—  
 Then the wounds of the heart all the heavier are \*

*The Wanderer*

And this from Ossian

With grief the sad mourner dies! Earth here encloses the loveliest  
 pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of the tomb. I often  
 sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass, their memory  
 rushes in my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of  
 the mountains you rest alone!

*Death of Crimora and Connal (Carric-Thura)*

This note of melancholy we see strongest today in the poet of the  
*Celtic Twilight*, Mr. W. B. Yeats.

"Everywhere is 'the fluttering sadness of earth;' memories and

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\* Professor Tinker

ghosts. . . The sea is a symbol of the ' drifting bitterness of life ' It is the ' bitter-tide ', ' the dim sea that cries her old cry still ' The ' dim tides are hurled upon the wharves of sorrow '."\*

But it is time we now turned to the Anglo-French poetry, for we enter a world that by contrast were nigh to a dream of paradise

## II

*Anglo-French*

Mists and cloud, sleet and rain, ice and snow, hardship and suffering, the ever-enduring conflict with the sea, the never-ending struggle against foes, and pervading all the half-light of the Arctic North, such is the atmosphere we are made to feel in the Anglo-Saxon poetry. But with the Norman Conquest of 1066 there came a people to the shores of Britain who brought with them more than expert knowledge of arms and strategy. There came with the Normans the knowledge of a life that had ever moved in the pure sunlight of open day. In the poetry of the Normans the word *clear* was one of the most frequent and most apprehended. What a contrast this must have offered to the Saxon inhabitants, familiar with the doom-haunted wastes of Grendel's lair. Absolute or pure poetry, about which there is so much academic discussion today, excludes horror, doom, or violent laughter. The Normans brought with them a literature of light before which the fen-mists about the lairs of monsters dissolved and grew infinitely remote, until all that was heard was a melodious chanting in a world of perpetual spring, to be sometimes broken by a stir of heroes with a blow of trumpets, summoning in the dawn a people to new courage and new emprise for what man had not heard of Roland and the trump of Roncesvalles! To the French, then, we owe our modern narrative forms with their heavy debts to the metrical romances. "But it is in Provence that you may find the ancestry of English poetry," says Mr. Earle Welby in his pleasant little *Popular History of English Poetry*. Thus it is to the French that we owe our present forms in English poetry, for Provençal had produced no less than nine hundred forms of stanza construction, and had an extraordinarily elaborate science of rhyming. Going

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\* Forrest Reed. W. B. Yeats. *A Critical Study* (Secker)

still further back to the origin of this fertility in rhyming we discover that it is in great measure part of the astonishing Saracenic contribution to art and culture which flourished at the court of the Emperor Barbarossa in Sicily.

The remarkable influence of the poetry of Provence\* was due to the rise of the Troubadours, a word derived from the Provençal verb *trobar*, to find or invent. It was the troubadours who improvised and discovered new and striking stanzaic forms for the elaborate lyrics they composed. Guilhem IX (b. 1071), Count of Poitiers and Aquitaine, is the earliest of whom anything definite is known and he may be taken as Europe's finest modern poet, using the kind of verse everybody uses now. He was typical of his class, for "he knew well how to sing and make verses, and for a long time he roamed all through the land to deceive the ladies . . . ." where *deceive* does not have quite the same value as we give it today.

We see, therefore, that the troubadours belonged to a noble class, and no fewer than twenty-three were reigning princes, among whom was Richard I of England. The social influence exerted by this group was remarkable, cultivating an atmosphere around them of culture and taste never previously achieved. The poetic forms most in use among the troubadours were *vers* and *canço*. The former referred to any composition intended to be sung, no matter on what subject, but the latter was reserved particularly for all amatory effusions. There were also two others which remind us of the reservations in Indian music for *morning* and *evening* songs—these were the *alba* or morning song, and the *serena* or evening song. Two more deserve mention the *pastorella*, generally relating to the love-adventures of a knight with a shepherdess, and the *planh*, or elegy; and in this kind the most famous was that of Bertran de Born on Henry Plantagenet, brother of Richard the Lion Heart.

In England, Provençal literature flourished at its liveliest at the court of Henry II, under the patronage of his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine. It is

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\* There were two languages in France at this time—French and Provençal—the former in the North, the latter in the South.

## INTRODUCTION

from the troubadours and their varied stanza forms that we derive the Middle English secular lyric. Unfortunately it never loses its impersonal note, for subjectivity becomes the gift of the Renaissance. The themes of the Middle English lyric remain for the most part artificial and conventional. praise of the beloved put forth in conventional similes—a phase shared by Persian poetry at its worst: with a background of Spring, or Summer, we have the inevitable nightingale and rose. Again the qualities of the lady were usually of such a high order as to make the poet bewail continually her heavenly exaltation in tones of shrillest hyperbole.

But a few lyrics do remain to us of greater worth and art. One of the most delightful of them is:

### ALISOVN

March is yeilding to April,  
Leaf and flower afresh they spring,  
Little birdlings at their will  
In their wise do sing  
I in love and longing go  
For the sweetest maid I know,  
She can bring me out of woe,  
I to her am bound  
A happy chance doth me betide,  
Methinks that Heaven my choice did guide  
From other maids to turn aside,  
And light on Alisoun

And then we have another poem filled with all the charming associations of an English spring:

### SPRING SONG

Lent is come with Love to town,  
With blossoms, and with birdling's rune  
That all gladness bringeth—  
Daisies blow on down and dale.

## INTRODUCTION

Sweetly trills the nightingale,  
 Each her glad song singeth  
 The Thrastle-cock doth loudly cry,  
 Past is winter's misery  
 When the woodruff springeth,  
 Yea, so glad the birdlings be  
 When they winter's warning see  
 That the woodland ringeth

The Middle English lyric falls into three main categories—the religious lyric, produced under the ecclesiastical influence, and very strong; the political songs—made famous in Provence with Bertran de Born; and the secular and amatory lyrics of the kind we have noticed above.

Among the religious lyrics we have to notice one—*Quia Amore Languo*. It is perhaps the most perfect of all and its spirit is scarcely recaptured until the seventeenth century mystics.

\*            \*            \*            \*  
 \*            \*            \*            \*

Upon this I saw a tree,  
 Beneath, there sat a Man alone,  
 Wounded from Head to Foot was He,  
 I saw His Heart's Blood run adown  
 Well fitted He to wear a Crown,  
 Such gracious men He sure did show;  
 I asked his grief, He spoke anon

"Quia Amore-languo!"  
 (Because of Love I suffer!)

But, on the whole, the mediæval lyric rather shows the way than leaves any particular outstanding contribution to the genesis of the lyric.

"The emotion of the mediæval poet takes the form of a set theme, whether of praise or plaint, as in the love-lyric, or of ascetic renunciation,

as in the religious lyric, or of evanescence, of mutability, the melancholy reflection of the passing of things—theme beloved alike by the poets of the Greek Anthology, by the minstrels of the Middle Ages, and by the poets of the Renaissance—which Spenser, as last of the mediævals, has sung so eloquently. Now where in the mediæval lyric do we find the note of personal recollection and confession, the subjective and individualistic note of the sonnets of Sidney and Drummond and Shakespeare, or of the lyrics of Donne, nowhere anything like the purely personal accent of Shelley's lyric cry, that concentrated utterance of the soul's despair of the modern idealist, sounding like the wail of a lost spirit.

O world, O life, O time,  
 On whose last steps I climb,  
 Trembling at that where I had stood before,  
 When will return the glory of your prime?  
 No more, ah! nevermore!

"The Middle English period was, doubtless, a period of artistic and poetic education for the race, and the gains are not a few, but most of them seem to be lost before the sixteenth century—lost from disuse, and fading into insignificance before the new and brilliant gains of the poetry founded on Italian art, that more fortunate offspring and development on a foreign soil of the happy first influence of the Troubadour song."

We see therefore that the influence and stimulus busy at the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine had to wait for its full fruition when it was received back yet once again through the far-reaching and gracious hands of Italian culture. Roger Ascham in his *Schoolmaster* cast scorn and derision at the Italianate Englishman of the Tudors, because of his faulty and superficial assimilation, unwitting that the same influence, in a different form, was already marvellously at work among those who soon became the greatest of the Elizabethans, and whose greatness could not have blazed for us so eternally but for the inheritance of Italy, and the revived strains of that fair music that had hovered over the mornings of Provence, issuing from the throats of plumed young singers,

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\* Frederick Ives Carpenter, *The English Lyric* (Blackie)



## INTRODUCTION

moving gloriously towards death, most pitiful, in the market places of Toulouse, Albi, and Carcassonne, where a great culture had been humbled fainting in the flames, never more to be seen or heard again of man

\* \* \* \* \*

. . . the fair fields of France  
Gave birth to myriad poets and singers unknown  
Who in a main flight gathering their playful flock  
Settled in Languedoc, on either side the Rhone  
Within the court and country of Raymond of Toulouse

\* \* \* \* \*

. . . the names that held  
Place in my heart and now shall have place in my line  
Were Avignon, Belcaire, Montelmar, Narbonne,  
Beziers, Castelnaudary, Bearn and Carcassonne,  
And truly I could have shared their fancy could I have lived  
Among those glad Jongleurs, living again for me,  
And had joy'd with them in that liberty and good will  
Which men call toleration, a thing so stiff to learn  
That to sceptics 'tis left and cynics In Provence  
Jew quarrelled not with Gentile, there was peace and love  
'Twixt Saracen and Christian, Catalan and Frank;  
And (wonder beyond wonder) here was harboured safe,  
Flourishing and multiplying, that sect of all sects  
Abominable, persecuted and defamed,  
Who with their Eastern chaffering and insidious talk  
Had ferreted through Europe to find peace on earth  
With Raymond of Toulouse,—those ancient Manichees \*

Thus, the late poet-laureate, in a tribute worthy of its subject This interesting religious sect that grew to health and success on the soil of Provence

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\* *The Testament of Beauty* Robert Bridges (OUP)

became in turn the victim of one of the cruellest wars ever waged in support of ecclesiastical intolerance. Rome struck and the Albigenses were hunted to their death, and where there had been singers, "a silence, unbroken silence prevailed."

\* \* \* \* \*

The rest is for the following pages to essay in gradual poetic procession, unfolding before the reader's eyes, without undue haste, or hurry, and, it is hoped without too great tediousness. The reader, now, will pass straight to the rebirth of English poetry under Surrey and Wyatt, for it is scarcely to our purpose to linger further over a period of hiatus following the death of Chaucer, when the lyric fell into disuse, and when the originality of a Skelton concerned itself mostly, not with repairing the untunefulness of English poetic numbers, but preferred to tilt a realistic wit against the conventional chivalric code of the courts of love, and the atmosphere of rose and nightingale. The modern English lyric whose development it is one of our main purposes to reveal dawns with the Renaissance.

Let us then now take flight over a century. Lo! we have entered the capital of Harry Tudor. Here streets are thronged with men whose eyes are purposeful and alert, and as we scan the mien of courtiers, scholars, merchants, we are quickly made aware of a great awakening abroad among them, they all seem eager and busy about some great discovery. There is reason for it, for there have been great happenings—two things have come to pass to work a miracle in men's minds. In 1453 of the previous reign, Constantinople had fallen to the Turk releasing a flood of MSS. and scholars to Italy; in the last decade of the century Columbus had landed at Palos on his return from his first voyage, and told the wondering Spaniards of the New World which had been discovered beyond the seas.

The Renaissance had achieved its climacteric

POEMS AND LYRICS

WYATT TO SHAKESPEARE

POEMS AND LYRICS

WYATT TO SHAKESPEARE

*The Lute Obeyes*

Blame not my lute ! for he must sound  
Of these and that as liketh me ,  
For lack of wit the lute is bound  
To give such tunes as pleaseth me.  
Though my songs be somewhat strange,  
And speaks such words as touch thy change,  
Blame not my lute !

My lute, alas ! doth not offend,  
Though that perforce he must agree  
To sound such tunes as I intend  
To sing to them that heareth me ;  
Then though my songs be somewhat plain,  
And toucheth some that use to feign,  
Blame not my lute !

My lute and strings may not deny,  
But as I strike they must obey ;  
Break not them then so wrongfully,  
But wreak thyself some wiser way ;  
And though the songs which I indite  
Do quit thy change with rightful spite,  
Blame not my lute !

SIR THOMAS WYATT

Spite asketh spite, and changing change,  
And falsed faith must needs be known;  
The fault so great, the case so strange,  
Of right it must abroad be blown;  
Then since that by thine own desert  
My songs do tell how true thou art,  
Blame not my lute!

Blame but thy self that hast misdone  
And well deserved to have blame;  
Change thou thy way, so evil begone,  
And then my lute shall sound that same;  
But if till then my fingers play  
By thy desert their wonted way,  
Blame not my lute!

Farewell, unknown for though thou break  
My strings in spite with great disdain,  
Yet have I found out, for thy sake,  
Strings for to string my lute again  
And if, perchance, this silly rhyme  
Do make thee blush at any time,  
Blame not my lute!

## SIR THOMAS WYATT

## SIR THOMAS WYATT

Wyatt is one of the two great courtier poets of the days of Henry VIII. To him, and his friend the Earl of Surrey, belong the distinction of the reform of English verse. Poetry had fallen upon curious days, when meter hobbled and halted, and where grace and harmony no longer dwelt. Bringing with him the influence of Italy, Wyatt did much to bring back the grace and lilt of the English lyric seen here in *The Lute Obeys*. The refrain, so popular a device to bring an added music to the lyric and ballad form, is here used with graceful and telling effect. Wyatt's poems reveal the character of the man himself, even his love poetry has flashes of home-truths that the lady may not disdain, as in the poem here.

*A Proper New Song made by a Student in Cambridge*

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Take heed of gazing over-much  
 on damsels fair unknown,  
 For oftentimes the snake doth lie  
 with roses overgrown;  
 And under fairest flowers  
 do noisome adders lurk,  
 Of whom take heed, I thee \*arced,  
 lest that thy cares they work.

What though that she doth smile on thee?  
 perchance she doth not love;  
 And though she smack thee once or twice,  
 she thinks thee so to prove;  
 And when that thou dost think  
 she loveth none but thee,  
 She hath in store perhaps some more  
 which so deceived be

Trust not therefore the outward show,  
 beware in any case \*



For good conditions do not lie  
where is a pleasant face.  
But if it be thy chance  
a lover true to have,  
Be sure of this, thou shalt  
not miss  
each thing that thou wilt  
crave.

And when as thou, good reader, shalt  
peruse this scroll of mine,  
Let this a warning be to thee,  
and say a friend of thine  
Did write thee this of love  
and of a zealous mind,  
Because that he sufficiently  
hath tried the female kind

Here, Cambridge, now I bid farewell!  
 adieu to students all!  
 Adieu unto the colleges  
 and unto Gonville Hall!  
 And you, my fellows once,  
 pray unto Jove that I  
 May have relief for this my  
 grief  
 and speedy remedy.

THOMAS RICHARDSON

And that he shield you everyone  
from beauty's luring looks,  
Whose bait hath brought me to my bane  
and caught me from my books.  
Wherefore, for you my prayer  
shall be  
to send you better grace,  
That modesty with honesty  
may guide your youthful race

THOMAS RICHARDSON

Here is an amusing poem revealing that student life in the sixteenth century university perhaps was not so very greatly different from that of its fellow in the twentieth. The writer has obviously suffered at the hands of the fair sex, where, under the guise of beauty and alluring charms, has been found those snares that only the idealists would have us believe cannot be harboured by outward grace. Against the renaissance Neo-Platonism of Spenser that would have us believe

A fair soul must in a fair body lie

our Cambridge student emphatically tells us that "good conditions do not lie where is a pleasant face". This warning he gives for the benefit of his friends, because says he "*he sufficiently hath tried the female kind*". The end of the story is sadder still, for it looks uncommonly as though our well-wisher left the university without taking his degree, if we may catch the significance of his concluding stanza in which he begs Jove to shield us everyone from

Beauty's luring looks,  
Whose bait hath brought me to my bane  
And caught me from my books

*A Litany*

Ring out your bells, let mourning shows be spread ,  
For Love is dead.  
All love is dead, infected  
With plague of deep disdain .  
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,  
And Faith fair scorn doth gain.  
From so ungrateful fancy,  
From such a female frenzy,  
From them that use men thus,  
Good Lord, deliver us !

Weep, neighbours, weep ! do you not hear it said  
That Love is dead ?  
His death-bed, peacock's folly ;  
His winding-sheet is shame ;  
His will, false-seeming holy ;  
His sole executor, blame.  
From so ungrateful fancy,  
From such a female frenzy,  
From them that use men thus,  
Good Lord, deliver us !

Let dirge be sung and trentals\* rightly read,  
For Love is dead  
Sir Wrong his tomb ordameth  
My mistress Marble-heart

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\* Trentals—a service of thirty masses for thirty days, each day, for a deceased person

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Which epitaph containeth,  
'Her eyes were once his dart.'  
From so ungrateful fancy,  
From such a female frenzy,  
From them that use men thus,  
Good Lord, deliver us !

Alas ! I lie, rage hath this error bred :  
Love is not dead.  
Love is not dead, but sleepeth  
In her unmatched mind,  
Where she his counsel keepeth,  
Till due desert she find.  
Therefore from so vile fancy,  
To call such wit a frenzy,  
Who Love can temper thus,  
Good Lord, deliver us !

(1598)

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

### SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

With the name of Philip Sidney we have arrived at one of the greatest names in England's Golden Age "Sidney is dead, dead is my friend, dead is the world's delight" said Fulk Greville the lifelong friend of Philip Sidney. Sidney's fame as a writer only came after his death, but in his life he lived a pattern to his age of the 'verray parfit gentil knight', and died a hero as a result of a wound received before Zutphen in the Netherlands. His most famous literary remains are the *'Arcadia'*, a pastoral romance that gave a stylistic fashion to his time, and of which Shakespeare took advantage, and the sonnet sequence—*Astrophel and Stella*. The chief peculiarity of this style is not Euphuism, but what in modern criticism we have grown to call the "pathetic fallacy", "'wherein' when ladies come dripping out of the water some drops seem to weep because they should ever pass from their bodies". Like Spenser, however, Sidney's chief contribution to English poetry is the heightened sense of line and colour, and light and shade, gained from the knowledge gathered, chiefly in Italy, of the fine arts. There he had sat for his portrait to one of the most famous names in Italian painting, the painter Titian. Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* set the tone of a century in manners and fine breeding. "Sidney," as has been most aptly said, "is its most fragrant page come to life".

In the poem before us we have one of Sidney's lyrics in which the well-known conceits of Elizabethan usage are in full swing. Personification and fancy are all displayed, making up a pleasing and delightful poem. The sudden turn in the last stanza is in the nature of a surprise, and brings the poem to a conclusion that is the vindication of ideal love.

*Infida's Song*

Sweet Adon, darest not glance thine eye

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Upon thy Venus that must die ?

*Je vous en prie, pity me :*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

See how sad thy Venus lies,

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Love in heart and tears in eyes,

*Je vous en prie, pity me.*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Thy lace as fair as Paphos brooks,

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Wherein fancy baits her hooks,

*Je vous en prie, pity me :*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,*

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Thy cheeks like cherries that do grow

*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Amongst the western mounts of snow,

*Je vous en prie, pity me :*

---

\* Darest not you, my sweet friend ?

*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,  
N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Thy lips vermilion, full of love,  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*  
Thy neck as silver-white as dove,  
*Je vous en prie, pity me :*  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,  
N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Thine eyes, like flames of holy fires,  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*  
Burn all my thoughts with sweet desires,  
*Je vous en prie, pity me .*  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,  
N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

All thy beauties sting my heart,  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*  
I must die through Cupid's dart,  
*Je vous en prie, pity me*  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,  
N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*

Wilt thou let thy Venus die ?  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami ?*  
Adon were unkind, say I,  
*Je vous en prie, pity me :*

her merry as she walks within the orchard close. It is the atmosphere of dainty raillery that breathes for us in this poetry of the Elizabethan lyric a social gallantry expressed through an exquisite pastoral and romantic convention. "vowing eternally Theocritus and Longus are not dead":

Ah, what is Love? It is a pretty thing,  
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king

How cunningly in the poem before us has the advantage been taken of weaving another language into the fabric of the whole, attaining supremely to a melody that lingers in the ears for many a day to come.

*Noserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,  
Noserez vous, mon bel ami?*

Robert Greene's other poem is an elaborate exercise sustaining all the wealth of metaphor and simile that the period revels in



*The Jew of Malta's Idea of Wealth*

So that of thus much that return wad made,  
 And of the thurd part of the Persian ships,  
 There was the venture summ'd and satisfied  
 As for those Samnites, and the men of Uz,  
 That bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece,  
 Here have I purs'd their paltry silverlings,  
 Fie · what a trouble 't is to count this trash !  
 Well fare the Arabians, who so richly pay  
 The things they traffic for with wedge of gold,  
 Whereof a man may easily in a day  
 \*Tell that which may maintain him all his life  
 The needy groom, that never finger'd groat,  
 Would make a miracle of thus much coin  
 But he whose steel-barr'd coffers are cramm'd full  
 And all his life-time hath been tired  
 Wearying his finger's ends with telling it,  
 Would in his age be loth to labour so,  
 And for a pound to sweat himself to death.  
 Give me the merchants of the Indian mines,  
 That trade in metal of the purest mould :  
 The wealthy Moor. that in the eastern rocks  
 Without control can pick his riches up,  
 And in his house heap pearl like pebble-stones :  
 Receive them free, and sell them by the weight ·

---

 \* Count

Wherein, as in a mirror, we perceive  
The highest reaches of a human wit;  
If these had made one poem's period,  
And all combin'd in beauty's worthiness,  
Yet should there hover in their restless heads,  
One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least  
Which into words no virtue can digest  
But how unseemly is it for my sex,  
My discipline of arms and chivalry,  
My nature, and the terror of my name,  
To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint  
Save only that in beauty's just applause,  
With whose instinct the soul of man is touch'd;  
And every warrior that is rapt with love  
Of fame, of valour, and of victory,  
Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits.  
I thus conceiving and subduing both,  
That which hath stoop'd the chiefest of the gods,  
Even from the fiery-spangled veil of heaven,  
To feel the lovely warmth of shepherds' flames,  
And mask in cottages of strow'd reeds  
Shall give the world to note, for all my birth,  
That virtue is the sum of glory.  
And fashion men with true nobility.

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

### CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

With Christopher Marlowe we have one of the most interesting writers of the Elizabethan period. On quitting Cambridge about the age of twenty-three he took London by storm with his famous play of Tamburlaine. The Renaissance in Europe, and all for what it stood, is epitomized at this time in the young Marlowe. In his creation of Tamburlaine we find one of the earliest examples in literature of the Superman. Through the voice of Tamburlaine Marlowe gives expression to his aspiration of things beyond the pale of humdrum life, creeds, and morality. In his hero Tamburlaine we have the intoxication of man with the life about him and which as a conqueror he must mould to his will, his ambition, and his passions. Such a spirit is well seen in Tamburlaine's outpourings to the Divine Zenocrate, particularly in such lines as these.

Thy person is more worth to Tamburlaine  
Than the possession of the Persian crown,  
Which gracious stars have promised at my birth  
A hundred Tartars shall attend on thee,  
Mounted on steeds swifter than Pegasus.

With milk-white harts up on an ivory sled  
Thou shalt be drawn amidst the frozen pools,  
And scale the icy mountains' lofty tops

This is the type of verse that Marlowe makes famous, which at its best becomes magnificently garnished and bejewelled rhetoric. The Elizabethan theatre audience was quite swept off its feet with lines such as these, the piled up imagery of which never seemed to flag or cease. If Tamburlaine typifies the lust of power, in *The Jew of Malta* we have a figure typifying the enjoyment of infinite riches. Such do we find revealed to us through the

Jew's lines on his idea of wealth. Marlowe brings to his English audience for the first time that thrill and excitement that had become a part of the everyday life of the Elizabethan Londoner, who if he could quicken and tingle in the theatre of Marlowe, outside might do no less when he heard from tavern and inn the conquests of territories made marvellous for him beyond the setting sun. Such was the age in which Marlowe lived and which was superbly fitting for a man of such a mind as his.

*Daphnis to Chloe*

If thou wilt come and dwell with me at home,  
My sheep-cote shall be strowed with new green rushes  
We'll haunt the trembling prickets as they roam  
About the fields, along the hawthorn bushes :

I have a piebald cur to hunt the hare :  
So we will live with dainty forest fare.

Nay, more than this, I have a garden plot,  
Wherein there wants nor herbs, nor roots, nor flowers,—  
Flowers to smell, roots to eat, herbs for the pot,—  
And dainty shelters when the welkin lours :

Sweet smelling beds of lilies and of roses,  
Which rosemary banks and lavender encloses.

There grows the gilly-flower, the mint, the daisy  
Both red and white, the blue-veined violet,  
The purple hyacinth, the spike to please thee,  
The scarlet-dyed carnation bleeding yet,

The sage, the savory, and sweet marjoram,  
Hyssop, thyme, and eye-bright, good for the blind  
and dumb

The pink, the primrose, cowslip, and daffadilly,  
The harebell blue, the crimson columbine,  
Sage, lettuce, parsley, and the milk-white lily,  
The rose, and speckled flower called sops-in wine,

Fine pretty kingcups, and the yellow boots  
That grows by rivers, and by shallow brooks,

And many thousand more, I cannot name,  
Of herbs and flowers that in gardens grow,  
I have for thee ; and conies that be tame,  
Young rabbits, white as swan, and black as crow,  
Some speckled here and there with dainty spots ;  
And more, I have two milch and milk-white goats.

All these, and more, I'll give thee for thy love,  
If these, and more, may tice thy love away :  
I have a pigeon-house, in it a dove,  
Which I love more than mortal tongue can say :  
And, last of all, I'll give thee a little lamb  
To play withal, new-weaned from her dam.  
(1594)

RICHARD BARNFIELD

RICHARD BARNFIELD

This poem is yet another charming exercise in Elizabethan pastoral. It also serves to show the very real delight that cultivated gentle folk of the time took in gardens and the beauty of flowers. Who does not remember something of Bacon's essay *On Gardens*? Says he, "And because the breath of flower is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air." Many of the flowers found in the poem you may find in Bacon's essay, for both Richard Barnfield, and Francis Bacon, are connoisseurs of gardens. How pretty these names sound in the poem, strung not to make a dull catalogue, but a garland of loveliness. There is an anticipation here of that great worshipper of the fruits of country life—Robert Herrick, whom very shortly we shall meet. This poem and Herrick's *To Phillis to Love, and Live with Him*, and several other in similar vein, nor forgetting Master Izaak Walton's *The Milkmaid's Song*, inherit from Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd to His Love*.

*The Masque of Cupid*

Next him was Fear, all armed from top to toe,  
Yet thought himself not safe enough thereby,  
But feared each shadow moving to and fro,  
And his own arms when glittering he did spy,  
Or clashing heard, he fast away did fly,  
As ashes pale of hue, and wingy-heeled ;  
And evermore on Danger fixed his eye,  
'Gainst whom he always bent a brazen shield,  
Which his right hand unarmed fearfully did wield.

With him went Hope in rank, a handsome maid,  
Of cheerful look and lovely to behold ;  
In silken samite she was light arrayed,  
And her fair locks were woven up in gold ;  
She always smiled, and in her hand did hold  
An holy water sprinkler, dipped in dew,  
With which she sprinkled favours manifold,  
On whom she list, and did great liking show,  
Great liking unto many, but true love to few.

And after them Dissemblance, and Suspect,  
Marched in one rank, yet an unequal pair ;  
For she was gentle, and of mild aspect,  
Courteous to all, and seeming debonair,  
Goodly adorned, and exceeding fair :



Yet was that all but painted, and purloined,  
 And her bright brows were decked with borrowed hair ;  
 Her deeds were forged, and her words false coined,  
 And always in her hand two clews of silk she twined.

But he was foul, ill-favoured, and grim,  
 Under his eyebrows looking still askance ;  
 And ever as Dissemblance laughed on him,  
 He loured on her with dangerous eye-glance,  
 Shewing his nature in his countenance ,  
 His rolling eyes did never rest in place,  
 But walked each where, for fear of hid mischance,  
 Holding a lattice still before his face,  
 Through which he still did peep, as forward he did pace

\* \* \*

Next after her the winged God himself  
 Came riding on a lion ravenous,  
 Taught to obey the manage of that elf,  
 That man and beast with power imperious  
 Subdueth to his kingdom tyrannous  
 His blindfold eyes he bade a while unbind,  
 That his proud spoil of that same dolorous  
 Fair dame he might behold in perfect kind ;  
 Which seen, he much rejoiced in his cruel mind

Of which full proud, himself uprearing high,  
 He looked round about with stern disdain ;

And did survey his goodly company :  
 And marshalling the evil ordered train,  
 With that the darts, which his right hand did strain  
 Full dreadfully he shook that all did quake,  
 And clapped on high his coloured wings twain,  
 That all his \*many it afraid did make ;  
 Tho blinding him again, his way he forth did take.

Behind him was Reproach, Repentance, Shame ;  
 Reproach the first, Shame next, Repent behind ;  
 Repentance feeble, sorrowful, and lame,  
 Reproach spiteful, careless, and unkind,  
 Shame most ill-favoured, bestial, and blind :  
 Shame loured, Repentance sighed, Reproach did scold :  
 Reproach sharp stings, Repentance whips entwined,  
 Shame burning brand-irons in her hand did hold :  
 All three to each unlike, yet all made in one mould.

And after them a rude confused rout  
 Of persons flocked, whose names is hard to read :  
 Amongst them was stern Strife, and Anger stout,  
 Unquiet Care, and fond Unthriftyhead,  
 Lewd Loss of Time, and Sorrow seeming dead,  
 Inconstant Change, and false Disloyalty,  
 Consuming Riotise, and guilty Dread  
 Of heavenly vengeance, faint Infirmary,  
 Vile Poverty, and lastly Death with infamy.

---

\* Many ] train

There were full many mo like maladies,  
Whose names and natures I note readen well ;  
So many mo, as there be fantasies  
In wavering women's wit, that none can tell,  
Or pains in love, or punishments in hell ;  
All which disguised marched in masquing wise,  
About the chamber with that damosel,  
And then returned, having marched thrice,  
Into their inner room, from whence they first did rise.

*(The Faerie Queen, III. xii. 1590)*

*Hymn to Beauty*

How vainly then do idle wits invent,  
That Beauty is nought else, but mixture made  
Of colours fair and goodly temperament  
Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade  
And pass away, like a summer's shade,  
Or that it is but comely composition  
Of parts well measured, with meet disposition

Hath white and red in it such wondrous power,  
That it can pierce through th' eyes unto the heart.  
And therein stir such rage and restless stour,  
As nought but death can stint his dolour's smart,  
Or can proportion of the outward part  
Move such affection in the inward mind,  
That it can rod both sense and reason blind?

Why do not then the blossoms of the field,  
Which are arrayed with much more orient hue,  
And to the sense most dainty odours yield,  
Work like impression in the looker's view?  
Or why do not fair pictures like power show,  
In which oft-times we nature see in art  
Excelled, in perfect limning every part?

But ah! believe me, there is more than so  
That works such wonders in the minds of men  
I that have often proved, too well it know:

And who so list the like assays to ken,  
 Shall find by trial, and confess it then,  
 That Beauty is not, as fond men misdeem,  
 An outward show of things, that only seem.

For that same goodly hue of white and red,  
 With which the cheeks are sprinkled, shall decay,  
 And those sweet rosy leaves, so fairly spread  
 Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away  
 To that they were, even to corrupted clay.  
 That golden wire, those sparkling stars so bright,  
 Shall turn to dust, and lose their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray  
 That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire,  
 Shall never be extinguished nor decay,  
 But when the vital spirits do expire,  
 Unto her native planet shall retire,  
 For it is heavenly born and cannot die,  
 Being a parcel of the purest sky.

For when the soul, the which derived was  
 At first, out of the great immortal Spright,  
 By whom all live to love, whilom did pass  
 Down from the top of purest heaven's height,  
 To be embodied here, it then took light  
 And lively spirits from that fairest star,  
 Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Nor trust the guile of fortune's blandishment,  
 But rather chose back to my sheep to turn,  
 Whose utmost hardness I before had tried,  
 Than, having learned repentance late, to mourn  
 Amongst those wretches which I there desried'

'Shepherd' (said Thestylis), 'it seems of spite  
 Thou speakest thus 'gainst their felicity,  
 Which thou enviest, rather than of right,  
 That aught in them blameworthy thou dost spy'.  
 'Cause have I none' (quoth he) 'of cankered will  
 To quite them ill, that me demeaned so well.  
 But self-regard of private good or ill  
 Moves me of each, so as I found, to tell,  
 And eke to warn young shepherds' wandering wit,  
 Which, through report of that life's painted bliss,  
 Abandon quiet home, to seek for it,  
 And leave their lambs to loss, misled amiss  
 For sooth to say, it is no sort of life,  
 For shepherd fit to lead in that same place,  
 Where each one seeks with malice and with strife,  
 To thrust down other into foul disgrace,  
 Himself to raise : and doth he soonest rise  
 That best can handle his deceitful wit,  
 In subtle shifts, and finest sleights devise,  
 Either by slandering his well-deemed name,  
 Through leasings lewd, and feigned forgery.

Or else by breeding him some blot of blame,  
 By creeping close into his secrecy ;  
 To which him needs a guileful hollow heart,  
 Masked with fair dissembling courtesy,  
 A filed tongue furnished with terms of art,  
 No art of school, but courtiers' schoolery.  
 For arts of school have there small countenance,  
 Counted but toys to busy idle brains,  
 And there professors find small maintenance,  
 But to be instruments of other's gains  
 Ne is there place for any gentle wit,  
 Unless to please itself it can apply  
 But shouldered is, or out of door quite shut,  
 As base, or blunt, unmeet for melody.  
 For each man's worth is measured by his weed,  
 As harts by horns, or asses by their ears .  
 Yet asses been not all whose ears exceed,  
 Nor yet all harts, that horns the highest bears.  
 For highest looks have not the highest mind,  
 Nor haughty words most full of highest thoughts :  
 But are like bladders blowen up with wind,  
 That being pricked do vanish into noughts.  
 Even such is all their vaunted vanity,  
 Nought else but smoke, that fumeth soon away ;  
 Such is their glory that in simple eye  
 Seem greatest, when their garments are most gay.  
 So they themselves for praise of fools do sell,  
 And all their wealth for painting on a wall ;  
 With price whereof, they buy a golden bell,

## EDMUND SPENSER

And purchase highest rooms in bower and hall :  
While single truth and simple honesty  
Do wander up and down despised of all ;  
Their plain attire such glorious gallantry  
Disdains so much, that none them in doth call'.

## EDMUND SPENSER

With Edmund Spenser we come to the greatest name in English poetry since Chaucer. The spade-work that had been accomplished by Surrey and Wyatt in the reform of English numbers is now completed by Spenser who brings a richness and melodiousness to English verse as remains eternally a testimony to his genius. Unlike what happened in France contemporaneously, Spenser did not break with tradition, but followed that established already by Chaucer, and it is to him that he looks as his great model. We should expect therefore to find a language tinged with archaism, and thus we find in his *Shepherd's Calender*, where however the language is made to clothe a form, the inheritance of Italian Renaissance-pastoral. As we have seen in *Philon the Shepherd* it has become the convention to disguise all character in the garb of shepherds, making up an artificial but charming atmosphere where lovers sigh the measure of their joys or disaffections. The extract given below shows the kind of atmosphere insinuated by the pastoral convention.—

"The third day after in the time that the morning did throw roses and violets in the heavenly floor against the coming of the sun rising from under a tree, which might have been their pavilion, they went on their journey . . . there were hills which garnished their proud height with stately trees; humble valleys whose base estates seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of pleasing flowers, thickets which being lined with most pleasant shade were witnessed so by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds, each pasture stored with sheep, feeding with sober security, while pretty lambs with bleating



oratory craved dam's comfort, here a shepherd's boy piping as though he should never be old, there a young shepherdess knitting and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work and her hands kept to her voice-music"

(Sidney's *Arcadia*)

This too was the heritage of Edmund Spenser in whose verses, notably in the *Faerie Queen*, we may find the coloured wealth of landscape steeped in the warm glow of eternal summer

Another theme, dear to the cultured man of the Renaissance, was Neo-Platonism. Seeing its splendour in Italy he caused it to take firm root in England. In Spenser there was a conflict between the sensuous and the ascetic. For a reconciliation of the two he turns to Plato, with whom the good cannot be separated from the beautiful. This thesis is brought out for us in the *Hymn to Beauty* and epitomized for us in the lines

For of the soul the body form doth take;  
For soul is form, and doth the body make

The *Faerie Queen* is Spenser's masterpiece, and its object "to fashion a gentleman by a virtuous and noble discipline." Spenser set out on his long poem with a steadfast moral purpose in view. It falls away after the first two books, and "romance triumphs afterwards in a series of amazingly garnished and embellished pageants and pictures accompanied by word melody unsurpassed." For the second time—for Chaucer had some of the secret too—literature rivals painting. The critics are agreed that had not Fate so ordained we might have had as great a painter with the brush as with the word—an English Titian or Veronese.

*Colin Clout* is an autobiographical poem in the disguise of pastoral, telling of Spenser's disappointment with the life at court and the bitterness ensuing—

"                                   it is no sort of life,  
For shepherd fit to lead in that same place,  
Where each one seeks with malice and with strife,  
To thrust down other into foul disgrace,  
Himself to raise "

## ANONYMOUS

### *I Saw My Lady Weep*

I saw my lady weep,  
And Sorrow proud to be advanced so  
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.  
Her face was full of woe,  
But such a woe, believe me, as wins more hearts  
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts

Sorrow was there made fair,  
And Passion wise; tears a delightful thing,  
Silence beyond all speech a wisdom rare.  
She made her sighs to sing,  
And all things with so sweet a sadness move,  
As made my heart at once both grieve and love

O fairer than aught else  
The world can show I leave off in time to grieve,  
Enough, enough; your joyful look excels;  
Tears kills the heart, believe  
Oh, strive not to be excellent in woe,  
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow.

## ANONYMOUS

### ANON

#### *I Saw My Lady Weep*

The lyric impulse is beautifully revealed in this graceful and moving little poem. The use of the conceit (from the Italian *Concetti*, witty or fanciful saying or turn of expression), is beautifully interwoven into this poem. Its beauty inherits directly from the emotional hyperbole of the troubadours. The aim of the poet in such lyrics as these is of course to arrive at some surprising conclusion in honour of his mistress, usually either by giving a new logical turn to the law of love, or by dwelling on the unheard of suffering which she causes him. Here is a specimen: "Oh gentle lady, who possessed so highly the art of pleasing, I dare not praise you, I dare not record all the fascinations of your beauty and your delightful manners, so sweet and seducing, nor, in a word, the thousand gifts of which forbid any lady to be your equal. For if, in praising your charms and brilliant qualities, I said all that the truth permitted me to say, every one would recognize immediately her whom I love." This is the poetry of Provençal sentiment. How near this is to the poem before us can at once be seen with its final and beautiful conclusion, surprising in its fine excess:

Tears kills the heart, believe  
Oh, strive not to be excellent in woe,  
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow

Here is a lyric beautiful in its restraint and perfect in the sweetness of its melodic accomplishment

*Pan's Song*

Pan's Syrinx was a girl indeed,  
Though now she's turned into a reed ;  
From that dear reed Pan's pipe does come,  
A pipe that strikes Apollo dumb ;  
Nor flute, nor lute, nor gittern can  
So chant it, as the pipe of Pan ;  
Cross-gartered swains, and dairy girls,  
With faces smug, and round as pearls.  
When Pan's shrill pipe begins to play,  
With dancing wear out night and day ;  
The bagpipe's drone his hum lays by,  
When Pan sounds up his minstrelsy ;  
His minstrelsy ! O base ! This quill,  
Which at my mouth with wind I fill,  
Puts me in mind, though her I miss,  
That still my Syrinx' lips I kiss

JOHN LYLY

JOHN LYLY

With John Lyly we meet again another leading figure among Elizabethan men of letters. Lyly is famous for setting a new stylistic fashion in his novel of *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*. The work attracted immense attention, and Shakespeare himself fell under its spell. Lyly carried over his antithetical style into the theatre using prose instead of verse. Lyly set the tone for Shakespearean comedy, and the practice of scattering fragrant little lyrics through his plays was improved on by Shakespeare with telling and exquisite effect. The little poem here has for its theme that ever-present theme so dear to the Elizabethans—the delightful enchanting background of Greek myth, in this case the story of Pan and Syrinx. Into this however with no apparent incongruity has strayed the 'cross-gartered swain' of the English countryside. The whole becomes a delicately sustained conceit in honour of an absent maiden.

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THOMAS SACKVILLE, EARL  
OF DORSET

(1536-1608)

*The Phantoms of Man's Ills*

Conscience And first, within the porch and jaws of hell,  
Sat deep Remorse of Conscience, all besprent  
With tears, and to herself oft would she tell  
Her wretchedness, and cursing never stent\*  
To sob and sigh, but ever thus lament  
With thoughtful care as she that, all in vain,  
Would wear and waste continually in pain.

Her eyes unsteadfast, rolling here and there,  
Whirled on each place, as place that vengeance  
brought,

So, was her mind continually in fear,  
Tossed and tormented with the tedious thought  
Of those detested crimes which she had wrought,  
With dreadful cheer and look thrown to the sky,  
Wishing for death, and yet she could not die.

Dread Next saw we Dread, all trembling how he shook,  
With foot uncertain proffered here and there,  
Benumbed of speech, and with a ghastly look  
Searched every place, all pale and dead for fear,  
His cap borne up with staring of his hair,  
'Stomied and amazed at his own shade for dread,  
And fearing greater dangers than was need

---

\* Stopped



Revenge

And next, within the entry of this lake,  
Sat fell Revenge, gnashing her teeth for ire,  
Devising means how she may vengeance take,  
Never in rest till she have her desire ;  
But frets within so far forth with the fire  
Of wreaking flames, that now determines she  
To die by death, or venged by death to be.

When fell Revenge, with bloody foul pretence,  
Had showed herself as next in order set,  
With trembling limbs we softly parted thence,  
Till in our eyes another sight we met,  
When from my heart a sigh forthwith I felt,  
Rueing, alas, upon the woeful plight  
Of Misery, that next appeared in sight.

Misery

His face was lean and soinedeal pined away,  
And eke his hands consumed to the bone,  
But what his body was I cannot say,  
For on his carcass raiment had he none,  
Save clouts and patches, pieced one by one ;  
With staff in hand and scrip on shoulders cast,  
His chief defence against the winter's blast.

His food, for most, was wild fruits of the tree,  
Unless sometimes some crumbs fell to his share,  
Which in his wallet long, God wot, kept he,  
As on the which full daintily would he fare ;

His drink, the running stream ; his cup, the bare  
Of his palm closed ; his bed, the hard cold ground ;  
To this poor life was misery ybound\*.

Care  
Whose wretched state when we had well beheld,  
With tender ruth on him and on his fears,  
In thoughtful cares forth then our pace we held ;  
And by and by another shape appears,  
Of greedy Care, still brushing up the breres,  
His knuckles knobbed, his flesh deep dented in,  
With tawed hands and hard ytanned skin,

The morrow gray no sooner hath begun  
To spread his light, even peeping in our eyes,  
When he is up and to his work yrun ;  
But let the night's black misty mantles rise,  
And with foul dark never so much disguise  
The fair bright day, yet ceaseth he no while,  
But hath his candles to prolong his toil.

Sleep  
By him lay heavy Sleep, the cousin of Death,  
Flat on the ground and still as any stone,  
A very corpse, save yielding forth a breath  
Small keep took he whom Fortune frowned on  
Or whom she lifted up into the throne  
Of high renown ; but as a living death,  
So, dead alive, of life he drew the breath.

---

\* Old form of past tense of the verb

The body's rest, the quiet of the heart,  
 The travail's ease, the still night's fere was he,  
 And of our life in earth the better part ;  
 Reaver of sight, and yet in whom we see  
 Things oft that tide, and oft that never be ;  
 Without respect esteeming equally  
 King Croesus' pomp and Irus' poverty.

(*Induction to the Mirror for Magistrates*)

### THOMAS SACKVILLE

With Sackville we quit the Elizabethan and return to the mediæval tradition where the note of allegory was triumphant. In *The Phantoms of Man's Ills* we have, passed in review before us, the terrors by which man is afflicted, and the abstract qualities that go to make up man's various psychology. Sackville has found a theme for a moral poem. By taking these abstractions such as conscience, dread, revenge, misery, etc., and using the mediæval trick of personification he has wrought a poem powerful in its grip and graphic delineation. It has well been said that Sackville serves as the great connecting link between the age of Chaucer and the age of Spenser. This will be seen best by comparing his poems with Spenser's *Masque of Cupid*.

*Lovers and Music*

*Lorenzo and Jessica, awaiting the return home of Portia and Nerissa, discourse of music.*

*Lor.* The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,  
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
And they did make no noise,—in such a night  
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,  
And sighed his soul towards the Grecian tents,  
Where Cressid lay that night.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertop the dew ;  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,  
And ran dismayed away

*Lor.* In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea-banks and wav'd her love  
To come again to Carthage.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Aeson

*Lor.* In such a night  
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew ;  
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,  
As far as Belmont

*Jes.* And in such a night

Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well ;  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
And ne'er a true one.

*Lor.* And in such a night  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

\* \* \*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the bank !  
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of musick  
Creep into our ears ; soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
Sit, Jessica : look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold ,  
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,  
But in her motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims  
Such harmony is in immortal souls ;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it.

(*Merchant of Venice*)

### *Advice to A Young Man*

Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,  
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware  
 Of entrance to a quarrel. but, being in,  
 Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee.  
 Give every man thy ear but few thy voice :  
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.  
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
 But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy :  
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man ;  
 And they in France, of the best rank and station,  
 Are most select and generous, chief in that.  
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be .  
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend ;  
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
 This above all,—To thine ownself be true ;  
 And it must follow, as the night the day,  
 Thou canst not then be false to any man

(*Hamlet*)

*It was A Lover and His Lass*

It was a lover and his lass,  
 With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
 That o'er the green corn-field did pass,  
 In the springtime, the only pretty ring time,  
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding ;  
 Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,  
 With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
 These pretty country folks would lie,  
 In the springtime, the only pretty ring time,  
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding ;  
 Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,  
 With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino.  
 How that a life was but a flower  
 In the springtime, the only pretty ring time,  
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding :  
 Sweet lovers love the spring

And therefore take the present time,  
 With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

For love is crowned with the prime  
In springtime, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding ;  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

(As You Like It)

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare, the dramatist, we all know. But Shakespeare the writer of exquisite lyrics and individual lines of surprising beauty is not so well known. A critic has put it "that the essential beauty of lyric lies in the melody of the oral word—sung, intoned, or spoken." Surely these lyrics of Shakespeare belong to that singing tradition of which we have already seen so many charming examples, particularly in such a lyric as *It was a Lover and His Lass* where we have that delightful refrain:

When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding ;  
Sweet lovers love the spring

I have taken the liberty of adding some extracts from the most romantic plays. Leigh Hunt, the friend of Keats, thought there was no scene more romantically lovely than that in *The Merchant of Venice* of Lorenzo and Jessica before the house of Portia. The secret of such a scene as this lies in the power of evoking romantic association. Perhaps one of the most famous examples in literature is in these lines of Lorenzo:

In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea-banks, and wav'd her love  
To come again to Carthage

The scene is given here for the reason that it is on the pinnacle of the success achieved by Shakespeare in his romantic manner. For full flavour of these famous lines we should read again the famous and tragic story in *Virgil's Æneid Bk IV*



*Rosalind's Madrigal*

Love in my bosom like a bee  
Doth suck his sweet ;  
Now with his wings he plays with me,  
Now with his feet.  
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,  
His bed amidst my tender breast ,  
My kisses are his daily feast,  
And yet he robs me of my rest.  
Ah, wanton, will ye ?

And if I sleep, then percheth he  
With pretty fight,  
And makes his pillow of my knee  
The livelong night.  
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string ;  
He music plays if so I sing ;  
He lends me every lovely thing ;  
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting.  
Whist, wanton, still ye !

Else I with roses every day  
Will whip you hence,  
And bind you, when you long to play,  
For your offence.  
I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in.

THOMAS LODGE

I'll make you fast it for your sin,  
I'll count your power not worth a pin.  
Alas ! what hereby shall I win  
If he gainsay me ?

What If I beat the wanton boy  
With many a rod ?  
He will repay me with annoy,  
Because a god.  
Then sit thou safely on my knee,  
And let thy bower my bosom be ;  
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee  
O Cupid, so thou pity me,  
Spare not, but play thee !

THOMAS LODGE

The muse of Thomas Lodge is thoroughly in keeping with his period. He owes a great deal to French and Italian models but his poetry as in the verses before us is fresh and tuneful. He is famous for several Euphuistic tales interspersed with poems among which *Rosalind* (1590), has become well-known as the source of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. What a tuneful happy poem is here with its pretty fanciful picture of Cupid, worker of mischief. You notice that this poem is called *Rosalind's Madrigal*. The madrigal has a particular significance in this period. Strictly speaking the madrigal was an unaccompanied song of from three to six voice-parts, to be sung by a small group of friends sitting round the table in the home or in tavern. The poem was treated in phrases, each several times repeated and commonly overlapping in the different voices. With this repetition the true

madrigal seldom used more than one stanza of six to ten lines. Sometimes the stanza of a longer poem were set as separate songs. From this account it may at once be seen that the term madrigal for this poem is in elastic usage of the term. But it is obvious that it is a poem that readily may find musical accompaniment, and no doubt had it, when it is remembered that among the educated classes of Elizabethan England singing was a necessary social accomplishment. This enthusiasm for singing gave English composers their opportunity. Countless lyrics, such as these we have been meeting, almost demanding song by their simple directness and melodic beauty, were being written, and the composers set them to madrigals and airs which are still among the chief glories of English music.

*The Woodman's Walk*

Through a fair forest as I went  
Upon a summer's day,  
I met a woodman quaint and gent,  
Yet in a strange array.  
I marvelled such at his disguise,  
Whom I did know so well,  
But thus in terms both grave and wise.  
His mind he 'gan to tell.  
Friend, muse not at this fond array,  
But list awhile to me ;  
For it hath help me to survey  
What I shall show to thee ;  
Long lived I in this forest fair,  
Till weary of my weal,  
Abroad in walks I would repair,  
As now I will reveal  
At first day's walk was to the court,  
Where beauty fed mine eyes ;  
Yet found I that the courtly sport  
Did mask in sly disguise.  
For falsehood sat in fairest looks.  
And there I found no joy.  
Desert went naked in the cold  
When crouching craft was fed ;  
Sweet words were cheaply bought and sold,  
But none that stood in stead.

Wit was employed for each man's own,  
*Plain meaning came too short ;*  
 All these devices seen and known,  
*Made me forsake the Court.*  
 Unto the city next I went,  
*In hope of better hap ;*  
 Where liberally I launched and spent,  
*As set on fortune's lap*  
 The little stock I had in store  
*Methought would ne'er be done ;*  
 Friends flocked about me more and more,  
*As quickly lost as won.*  
 For when I spent then they were kind,  
*But when my purse did fail,*  
 The foremost man came last behind ;  
*Thus love with wealth doth quail.*  
 Once more for cooting yet I strove,  
*Although the world did frown,*  
 But they before that held me up,  
*Together trod me down.*  
 And lest once more I should arise,  
*They sought my quite decay ;*  
 Then got I into this disguise,  
*And thence, I stole away.*  
 And in my mind, methought, I said,  
*Lord bless me from the city !*  
 Where simpleness thus betrayed  
*And no remorse or pity.*

Yet would I not give over so,  
But once more try my fate,  
And to the country then I go,  
To live in quiet state.  
There did appear no subtle shows  
But yea and nay went smoothly ;  
But, Lord, how country folks can glose,  
When they speak most soothly !  
More craft was in a buttoned cap,  
And in an old wive's sail,  
Than in my life it was my hap  
To see on down or dale.  
There was no open forgery,  
But underhanded gleaning ;  
Which they call country policy,  
But hath a worser meaning.  
Some good bold face bears out the wrong,  
Because he gains thereby ;  
The poor man's back is cracked ere long,  
Yet there he lets him lie ;  
And no degree among them all  
But had such close intending ;  
That I upon my knees did fall,  
And prayed for their amending.  
Back to the woods I got again,  
In mind perplexed sore,  
Where I found ease of all this pain,  
And mean to stray no more.

ANTHONY MUNDAY

There city, court nor country too,  
 Can any way annoy me;  
 But as a woodman ought to do,  
 I freely may employ me.  
 There live I quietly alone,  
 And none to trip my talk;  
 Wherefore when I am dead and gone  
 Think on the woodman's walk

ANTHONY MUNDAY

This is a poem from the *Elizabethan Miscellanies*, those collections made by enterprising publishers, and comprising verses marked by a wonderful spontaneity. Poems of this class have of course the blemishes as well as the merits of youth. Their workmanship unpolished and crude though it sometimes is, nevertheless is pleasing with the zest for new arrangement and contrivance. This type of verse is open and artless and unlike the poetry of the succeeding age does not aim at subtle effects, and where elaboration is invited it is the elaboration of the child rather than of the adult. We must not look for cunningly wrought harmonies of diction and meter which charm us in the work of poets of the later age. Here are true songs of innocence notable for the carefree lilt and cadence, strangely lacking often enough in the sophistication of the modern lyric. In *The Woodman's Walk* we have a somewhat similar experience to that revealed in Spenser's *Colin Clout*. It is a scathing indictment of court life and contrasts with evident sincerity the refuge brought to the afflicted by the sweets and peace and truth of the woodland-scene. Even the country-folk is not regarded with benevolence as in the lines:

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ANONYMOUS

I call upon them to come on,  
And wend me laughing, ho, ho, ho !

Sometimes I meet them like a man ;  
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound ;  
And to a horse I turn me can,  
To trip and trot about them round  
But if to ride, my back they stride,  
More swift than wind away I go,  
O'er hedge and lands, through pools and ponds  
I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho !

When lazy queens have naught to do,  
But study how to cog and lie ;  
To make debate and mischief too  
"Twixt one another secretly ;  
I mark their glose and do disclose  
To them that they had wronged so :  
When I have done, I get me gone,  
And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho !

When men do traps and engines set  
In loop-holes, where the vermin creep,  
That from their folds and houses fet  
Their ducks and geese, their lambs and sheep ;  
I spy the gin, and enter in,  
And seem a vermin taken so :  
But when they there approach me near,  
I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho !

By wells and gills in meadows green,  
 We nightly dance our hay disguise,  
 And to our fairy king and queen  
 We chant our moonlight harmonies.  
 When larks gin sing, away we fling,  
 And babes new-born steal as we go ;  
 An elf in bed we leave instead,  
 And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho !

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I  
 Thus nightly revelled to and fro,  
 And for my pranks men call me by  
 The name of Robin Good-fellow.  
 Friends, ghosts and sprites, that haunt the nights,  
 The hags and goblins, do me know  
 And beldams old my feats have told,  
 So vale, vale\* , ho, ho, ho !

---

\* Farewell

## ANON

*The Mad-merry Pranks of Robin Good-fellow*

Here is a poem illustrating a theme of prevailing interest in Elizabethan life—the folklore and superstitions of the English countryside. How well informed Shakespeare was in this lore we all know, particularly in that charming outdoor phantasy "*The Midsummer Night's Dream*". Here is Robin Good-fellow, himself a confidant of his Master Oberon, who pranks his masterful way through scene after scene as Puck the terror of dairy-maids and love-sick swains. In the poem we have before us we are treated to an autobiographical account of the night sports of Robin Good-fellow. A whole catalogue of mischief is set before us. What a fairy land indeed must this Elizabethan world have been for children whose grand-dams could tell them such enchanting tales as these! We shall meet again with Robin Good-fellow when we see him through the enchanted pen of Shakespeare's friend, and rival dramatist, Ben Jonson. Folklore is the heritage of every countryside equally in the East as well as the West.

*Song*

If I freely may discover  
What could please me in my fover,  
I would have her fair and witty,  
Savouring more of court than city :  
A little proud, but full of pity ;  
Light and humorous in her toying ;  
Oft building hopes, and soon destroying ;  
Long, but sweet in the enjoying ;  
Neither too easy nor too hard :  
All extremes I would have barred.

She should be allowed her passions,  
So they were but used as fashions ;  
Sometimes forward, and then frowning,  
Sometimes sickish, and then swowning,  
Every fit with change still crowning.  
Purely jealous I would have her,  
Then only constant when I crave her ;  
'Tis a virtue should not save her.  
Thus, nor her delicacies would cloy me,  
Neither her peevishness annoy me.

Close by the ruin of a shaken abbey,  
 Torn with an earthquake down unto the ground,  
 'Mongst graves and grots, near an old charnel-house,  
 Where you shall find her sitting in her forum,  
 As fearful and melancholic as that  
 She is about ; with caterpillars' kells,  
 And knotty cob-webs, rounded in with spells  
 Thence she steals forth to relief in the fogs,  
 And rotten mists, upon the fens and bogs,  
 Down to the drowned lands of Lincolnshire ;  
 To make ewes cast their lambs, swine eat their farrow,  
 The housewives turn not work, nor the milk churn !  
 Writhe children's wrists, and suck their breath in sleep,  
 Get vials of their blood ! and where the sea  
 Casts up his slimy ooze, search for a weed  
 To open locks with, and to rivet charms,  
 Planted about her in the wicked feat  
 Of all her mischiefs, which are manifold.

*John.* I wonder such a story could be told  
 Of her dire deeds

*George.* I thought a witch's banks  
 Had inclosed nothing but the merry pranks  
 Of some old woman.

*Scarlet.* Yes, her malice more.

*Scath.* As it would quickly appear had we the store  
 Of his collects.

*George.* Ay, this gud learned man  
 Can speak her right

*Scar.* He knows her shifts and haunts.

Alken And all her wiles and turns The venom'd  
plants  
Wherewith she kills! where the sad mandrake grows,  
Whose grows are deathful; the dead-numbing night-  
shade,

The stupefying hemlock, adder's tongue  
And martagan; the shrieks of luckless owls  
We hear, and croaking night-crows in the air!  
Green-bellied snakes, blue fire-drakes in the sky,  
And giddy flitter-mice with leather wings!  
The scaly beetles, with their habergeons,  
That make a humming murmur as they fly!  
There in the stocks of trees, white \*fa'ies do dwell  
And span-long elves that dance about a pool,  
With each a little changeling in their arms!  
The airy spirits play with falling stars,  
And mount the sphere of fire to kiss the moon!  
While she sits reading by the glow-worm's light,  
Or rotten wood, o'er which the worm hath crept,  
The baneful schedule of her nocent charms,  
And binding characters through which she wounds  
Her puppets, the sigilla of her witchcraft  
All this I know, and I will find her for you;

\*

\*

\*

But you must give her law; and you shall see her  
Make twenty leaps and doubles; cross the paths,  
And then squat down beside us.

\* Fairies



## BEN JONSON

*John.* Crafty croan I .

I long to be at the sport, and to report it.

*Scar.* We'll make this hunting of the witch as famous,  
As any other hlast of venery.

*Scath.* Hang her, foul hag I she'll be a stinking chase.  
I had rather ha' the hunting of her heir.

*George* If we should come to see her, crv, *So ho !* once.

*Alken.* That I do promise, or I am no good hag-finder.

*Exeunt.*

## BEN JONSON

With Shakespeare, Ben Jonson is the twin-figure of the Elizabethan age. His limitations are quickly perceived for he had little of Shakespeare's immense range and vigour. He is the most classic figure of his time. "He aimed at putting much meaning into the metrical line and his composition tended to be consecutive and regular. He subordinated fire to logic. He taught soundness, reflection, self control." 'Soundness, reflection, self control' these are the true foundations of the classical spirit. Restraint, discipline, balance, polish, finish, all these things Ben Jonson regarded highly and inherited from his Latin training. His culture was fundamentally Latin while his knowledge of Greek was unmatched for his times. The Greek influence is best seen in his lyrics, many of them an imitation of the Greek anthology. He wrote beautiful elegies and poignant epitaphs only to be surpassed by the lyrics of his disciple Herrick. As a humanist his place is easily the highest before Milton. In the examples chosen before us his *Song* is in the true manner of the best song writer, while *Mab the Mistress-Fairy* is the fairy-queen reflected in the rustic popular imagination. It should be compared with a previous poem *The Mad-merry Pranks of Robin Good-fellow*. Steeped in the lure of Greek and Rome though he is, when he turns to the country-side for his inspiration, we find his knowledge is not less detailed or profound.

BEN JONSON

*The Witch of Sherwood* is taken from his delightful pastoral play *The Sad Shepherd*, and is a surprising example illustrating that Jonson, when the mood took him, might rival the Shakespeare of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Who would not attribute to Shakespeare lines such as those beginning

There in the stocks of tree, white fa'ies do dwell,  
And span-long elves that dance about a pool

*Hymn to Pan*

All ye woods, and trees, and bowers,  
All ye virtues, and ye powers  
That inhabit in the lakes,  
In the pleasant springs or brakes,  
Move your feet  
To our sound,  
Whilst we greet  
All this ground  
With his honour and his name  
That defends our flocks from blame

He is great, he is just,  
He is ever good, and must  
Thus be honoured Daffadillies,  
Roses, pinks and loved lilies  
Let us fling,  
Whilst we sing,  
Ever holy,  
Ever holy,  
Ever honoured, ever young!  
Thus great Pan is ever sung

JOHN FLETCHER

*Satyr's Song*

*A Satyr presenting a Basket of Fruit to the Faithful  
Shepherdess*

Here be grapes whose lusty blood  
Is the learned poet's good ;  
Sweeter yet did never crown  
The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown  
Than the squirrel's teeth that crack them ;  
Deign, oh, fairest fair ! to take them  
For these black-eyed Dryope  
Hath oftentimes commanded me  
With my clasped knee to climb .  
See how well the lusty time  
Hath deck'd their rising cheeks in red,  
Such as on your lips is spread  
Here be berries for a queen,  
Some be red—some be green ;  
These are of that luscious meat  
The great god Pan himself doth eat ;  
All these, and what the woods can yield,  
The hanging mountain or the field,  
I freely offer , and ere long  
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong ;  
Till when, humbly leave I take,  
Lest the great Pan do awake  
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,

JOHN FLETCHER

Under a broad beech's shade ;  
I must go, I must run,  
Swifter than the fiery sun

*Evening Song*

Shepherds all, and maidens fair,  
Fold your flocks up, for the air  
'Gins to thicken, and the sun  
Already his great course hath run.  
See the dew-drops how they kiss  
Every little flower that is ,  
Hanging on their velvet heads,  
Like a rope of crystal beads ;  
See the heavy clouds low falling,  
And bright Hesperus down calling  
The dead Night from underground ;  
At whose rising mists unsound,  
Damps and vapours fly apace,  
Hovering o'er the wanton face  
Of these pastures, where they come,  
Striking dead both bud and bloom.  
Therefore, from such danger lock  
Every one his loved flock ;  
And let your dogs lie loose without,  
Lest the wolf come as a scout  
From the mountain, and, ere day,  
Bear a lamb or kid away .

JOHN FLETCHER

Or the crafty thievish fox  
Break upon your simple flocks.  
To secure yourself from these,  
Be not too secure in ease ;  
Let one eye his watches keep,  
Whilst the other eye doth sleep ;  
So you shall good shepherds prove,  
And for ever hold the love  
Of our great god. Sweetest slumbers,  
And soft silence, fall in numbers  
On your eyelids ! So, farewell .  
Thus I end my evening's knell.

JOHN FLETCHER

We come to a poet perhaps most splendidly illustrative of all of England's pastoral tradition. The extracts we have here are from Fletcher's half-lyrical pastoral play *The Faithful Shepherdess*.

The English pastoral inherits from a great tradition, from Greece through Theocritus and Longus, from Italy through Virgil and Tasso, and England through Sidney and Spenser. From this never exhausted well of a great pastoral tradition England has drawn her inspiration to an even greater extent than her continental rivals, France, and Italy. As we have previously seen the world of pastoral instituted a convention in literature and passed into current speech the term "Arcadian". Sicily, of course, is the original scene of the pastoral picture. In the idylls of Theocritus we are introduced not to paste-board shepherds and shepherdesses, but to real denizens of the country-side who, no matter how charming and musical their nomenclature, carry with them the true rustic flesh and blood vigour and knowledge of the soil. Theocritus is a realist, but it does not alter the charm and exquisite beauty of these abodes that are far removed from turbulence and spite of

## JOHN FLETCHER

cities To the Renaissance it seemed a world of enchanting escape and fitted in remarkably with the zest and pursuit of the elusive fairy beauty These great men of the Renaissance, names great in Italian culture, and which produced similar great names in other countries, believed that beauty was a thing not to be merely contemplated but must be associated with the idea of splendid living It is all summed up for us in those lines of Lorenzo de Medici the presiding genius of Italy's most famous city Florence

Youth is wondrous but how fleeting!  
Sing, and laugh, and banish sorrow,  
Give to happiness good greeting,—  
Place thy hopes not on the morrow

Beauty must be lived perfectly, must distill the very essence from the day's ecstasy—for how long can we tell it will endure Through the genius of men like the great names famous of the Italian and English pastoralists, Pan and Syrinx are not dead, but stir the forest floors once more with the wind of their immortal fleeting

A French writer, true artist in his craft, has painted this world for us in this one glowing paragraph

"Oh, her delightful people—gods, heroes, and nymphs! Oh! her brooding landscapes, her ærene epithets, her fables, her myths, her luminous legends her Parnassus, her Olympus, and her sweet realm of Cythera Hebes and Phebes, moving with the rhythm of goddesses in the Spring-time in the foreground the youths garlanded with roses The flute-players in the myrtles the cars of doves circling in the azure the charm of Anacreon, the shepherds of Theocritus the harmonious and yielding forms conjured by Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid the exquisite shapes, magnificent and perfect all this limpid world, candid, happy, from which all veils have been torn away to glitter in the sun, virginal and pure, where sorrow is unknown Thus, has she permeated the poetry of Italy thus, is the meaning of Renaissance"

---

\* Le Quattrocento Philip Monmer

Something thus is the heritage of Greece and Rome that made possible the glories of Leonardo and Michael-Angelo and the genius of men such as Shakespeare and Ben Jonson and the writer of the poem here before us

With the poet that follows we shall bid farewell to these illustrations of one of England's most delicious themes in poetry, for we are on the eve of a desire among poets to place something in their writings that should take its appeal from that which is more solid and more enduring than response to sensuous beauty and abandon alone



*Man's Mortality*

Like as the damask rose you see,  
Or like the blossom on the tree,  
Or like the dainty flower of May,  
Or like the morning to the day,  
Or like the sun, or like the shade,  
Or like the gourd which Jonas had—  
Even such is man, whose thread is spun,  
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done.  
The rose withers, the blossoms blasteth,  
The flower fades, the morning hasteth,  
The sun sets, the shadow flies,  
The gourd consumes ; and man he dies.

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,  
Or like a tale that's new begun,  
Or like the bird that's here to-day,  
Or like the pearled dew of May,  
Or like an hour, or like a span,  
Or like the singing of a swan—  
Even such is man, who lives by breath,  
Is here, now there • so life, and death.  
The grass withers, the tale is ended,  
The bird is flown, the dew's ascended,  
The hour is short, the span not long,  
The swan's near death ; man's life is done.

Like to the bubble in the brook,  
 Or, in a glass, much like a look,  
 Or like a shuttle in weaver's hand,  
 Or like a writing on the sand,  
 Or like a thought, or like a dream,  
 Or like the gliding of the stream—  
 Even such is man, who lives by breath,  
 Is here, now there · so life, and death.  
 The bubble's cut, the look's forgot,  
 The shuttle's flung, the writing's blot,  
 The thought is past, the dream is gone,  
 The water glides ; man's life is done.

Like to an arrow from the bow,  
 Or like swift course of watery flow,  
 Or like the time 'twixt flood and ebb,  
 Or like the spider's tender web,  
 Or like a race, or like a goal,  
 Or like the dealing of a dole—  
 Even such is man, whose brittle state  
 Is always subject unto fate  
 The arrow's shot, the flood soon spent,  
 The time no time, the web soon rent,  
 The race soon run, the goal soon won,  
 The dole soon dealt , man's life first done

Like to the lightning from the sky,  
 Or like a post that quick doth hie,  
 Or like a quaver in short song,

## ANONYMOUS

Or like a journey three days long,  
Or like the snow when summer's come,  
Or like the pear, or like the plum—  
Even such is man, who heaps up sorrow,  
Lives but this day and dies to-morrow.  
The lightning's past, the post must go,  
The song is short, the journey's so.  
The pear doth rot, the plum doth fall,  
The snow dissolves, and so must all.

(M. Sparke's *The Crumbs of Comfort*, 1628.  
Poem written before 1628)

## ANON

### *Man's Mortality*

The poem is an elaborate and sustained simile taking for its theme the life of man. The cleverness is never in question, and each stanza is finished off with a couplet that speaks its own finality. The mood is one of pessimism but at the same time betrays no whining for the adverse laws of fate, more particularly the briefness of man's time here on earth. This is splendidly brought out in the concluding lines of the poem.

Even such is man, who heaps up sorrow,  
Lives but this day and dies tomorrow

*The Forester Your Only Gallant Man*

" For my profession then, and for the life I lead,  
All others to excel, thus for myself I plead .  
I am the prince of sports, the forest is my fee,  
He's not upon the earth, for pleasure lives like me ;  
The morn no sooner puts her rosy mantle on,  
But from my quiet lodge I instantly am gone,  
When the melodious birds from every bush and brier  
Of the wild spacious wastes makes a continual quire.  
The mottled meadows then, new varnish'd with the sun,  
Shoot up their spicy sweets upon the winds that run  
In easily ambling gales, and softly seem to pace,  
That it the longer might their lusciousness embrace.  
I'm clad in youthful green, I other colours scorn,  
My silken baldric bears my bugle or my horn,  
Which setting to my lips, I wind so loud and shrill,  
As makes the echoes shout from every neighbouring hill.

My dog-hook at my belt, to which my lyam's tied,  
My sheaf of arrows by, my wood-knife at my side,  
My cross-bow in my hand, my gaffle or my rack,  
To bend it when I please, or if I list to slack,  
My hound then in my lyam, I by the woodman's art  
Forecast where I may lodge the goodly high-palm'd  
Hart.

To view the grazing herds so sundry times I use,

MICHAEL DRAYTON

A fresh and charming little poem taking its beauty from the freshness and brightness of its scenes and association.

As princes and great lords have palaces, so I  
Have in the forests here my hall and gallery,

..... ..  
..... .. Then say all what ye can,  
The forester is still your only gallant man

*Love's Deity*

I long to talk with some old lover's ghost,  
Who died before the god of love was born :  
I cannot think that he, who then loved most,  
Sunk so low as to love one which did scorn.  
But since this god produced a destiny,  
And that vice-nature, custom, lets it be,  
I must love her that loves not me

Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much,  
Nor he in his young godhead practised it ;  
But when an even flame two hearts did touch,  
His office was indulgently to fit  
Actives to passives Correspondency  
Only his subject was , it cannot be  
Love, till I love her that loves me.

But every modern god will now extend  
His vast prerogative as far as Jove.  
To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend,  
All is the purlieu of the god of love.  
Oh ! were we wakened by this tyranny  
To ungod this child again, it could not be  
I should love her, who loves not me

Rebel and atheist too, why<sup>2</sup> murmur I,

As though I felt the worst that love could do?  
Love may make me leave loving, or might try

A deeper plague, to make her love me too;  
Which, since she loves before, I am loath to see,  
Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must be,

If she, whom I love, should love me.

### *The Message*

Send home my long-strayed eyes to me,

Which, oh, too long have dwelt on thee.

Yet, since there they have learned such ill,

Such forced fashions,

And false passions,

That they be

Made by thee

Fit for no good sight, keep them still

Send home my harmless heart again,

Which no unworthy thought could stain,

But if it be taught by thine

To make jestings

Of protestings,

And cross both

Word and oath,

Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.

JOHN DONNE

Yet, send me back my heart and eyes,  
That I may know and see thy lies ;  
And may laugh and joy when thou  
Art in anguish,  
And dost languish  
For some one  
That will none,  
And prove as false as thou art now

JOHN DONNE

When John Donne wrote "For God's sake hold your tongue and let me love," he was really answering the dominant love convention of the time—Petrarchan Platonism. Petrarch had established a series of states necessary for a lover to pass through and his Laura "had become the pattern for all poets unhesitatingly to follow." The lover must alternately burn and freeze, to sorrow when removed from the beloved one's presence, to live only in her sight, and feel that all inspiration proceeded from her alone. The Petrarchan Lady was to be as beautiful and virtuous as she was cold and indifferent to her lover. The type never varied, she possessed an individuality, no life or movement, she was in fact a stationary sun, radiating all happiness yet insensible of her own attractions. The highest compliment has been paid to Spenser when he had been called the English Petrarch.

John Donne had felt intensely the unreality of all this, and daring innovator that he was, struck the first great note of colloquial intimacy in English literature. He is the first magnificent reaction against the pastoral, mythological, allegorical, and platonic conventions insisted on by the whole body of Elizabethan poets. The conventions and the morals held up by chivalry he despised. Equally he despised the over-smooth sweetly-cloying, and often monotonous rhyme of his age. "A wrencher of accent" Ben Jonson called



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him ; in later times, " the advance guard of the Brownings of our age." And yet as with Browning he could remain susceptible to the pure lyric impulse as in the poem among our illustrations *The Message*, which for spontaneous music may match itself with any of the greatest Elizabethan poets. The *tour-de-force* in subtleties is the aim of the group of poets known as the Metaphysicals. As he says truly in his poem *The Will*, to nature he gives all

That I in rhyme have writ  
And to my company my wit

This further is what he says of *The Will* in the matter of his legacies to love. He will give

To women or the sea my tears  
Thou, Love, has taught me heretofore  
By making me serve her, who had twenty more,  
That I should give to none but such as had too much before

which as a sample of wit is cleverness enough

*Constancie*

Who is the honest man?  
He that doth still and strongly good pursue,  
To God, his neighbour, and himself most true:  
Whom neither force nor fawning can  
Unpinne, or wrench from giving all their due.

Whose honestie is not  
So loose or easie, that a ruffling winde  
Can blow away, or glittering look it blinde  
Who rides his sure and even trot,  
While the world now rides by, now lags behinde.

Who, when great trials come,  
Nor seeks, nor shunnes them; but doth calmly stay  
Till he the thing and the example weigh.  
All being brought into a summe,  
What place or person calls for, he doth pay.

Whom none can work or wooe  
To use in any thing a trick or sleight,  
For above all things he abhorres deceit.  
His words and works and fashion too  
All of a piece, and all are cleare and straight.

Who never melts or thaws  
 At close tentations when the day is done,  
 His goodnesse sets not, but in dark can runne :  
 The sunne to others writeth laws,  
 And is their vertue ; Vertue in his Sunne

Who, when he is to treat  
 With sick folks, women, those whom passions sway,  
 Allows for that, and keeps his constant way :  
 Whom others faults do not defeat :  
 But though men fail him, yet his part doth play.

Whom nothing can procure,  
 When the wide world runnes bias, from his will  
 To writhe his limbes, and share, not mend the ill  
 This is the Mark-man, safe and sure,  
 Who still is right, and prayes to be so still

*O England*

O England ! full of sinne, but most of sloth :  
 Spit out thy flegme, and fill thy brest with glorie :  
 Tho Gentry bleats, as if thy native cloth  
 Transfus'd a sheepishnesse into thy storie  
 Not that they all are so . but that the most  
 Are gone to grasse, and in the pasture lost.

This losse springs chiefly from our education.  
Some till their ground but let weeds choke their sonne:  
Some mark a partridge, never their childe's fashion.  
Some ship them over, and the thing is done.

Studie this art, make it thy great designe:  
And if God's image move thee not, let Thine.

Some great estates provide, but doe not breed  
A mast'ring minde: so both are lost thereby:  
Or els they breed them tender, make them need  
All that they leave. this is flat povertie

For he, that needs five thousand pound to live,  
Is full as poore as he, that needs but five

The way to make thy sonne rich, is to fill  
His minde with rest, before his trunk with riches:  
For wealth without contentment, climbeth a hill  
To feel those tempests, which fly over ditches.

But if thy sonne can make ten pound his measure,  
Then all thou addest may be call'd his treasure

When thou dost purpose ought, (within thy power)  
Be sure to doe it, though it be but small  
Constance knits the bones, and makes us stowre,  
When wanton pleasures becken us to thrall.

Who breaks his own bond, forfeiteth himself  
What nature made a ship, he makes a shelf

Doe all things like a man, not sneakingly :  
 Think the king sees thee still · for his King does.  
 Simp'ring is but a lay hypocrisie :  
 Give it a corner, and the clue undoes.

Who fears to do ill, sets himself to task :  
 Who fears to do well, sure should wear a mask.

Look to thy mouth : diseases enter there.  
 Thou hast two sconses. If thy stomach call :  
 Carve, or discourse : do not a famine fear.  
 Who carves, is kind to two : who talks, to all  
 Look on meat, think it dirt, then eat a bit :  
 And say with all, Earth to earth I commit

Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,  
 Thou liv'st by rule. What doth not so, but man ?  
 Houses are built by rule, and commonwealths  
 Entice the trusty sunne, if that you can,  
 From his Ecliptick line · becken the skie,  
 Who lives by rule, then, keeps good companie.

Who keeps no guard upon himself, is slack,  
 And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.  
 Man is a shop of rules, a well truss'd pack,  
 Whose every parcell underwrites a law.  
 Lose not thy self, nor give thy humours way  
 God gave them to thee under lock and key.





## THOMAS CAREW

## THOMAS CAREW

In Thomas Carew we have a poet who first shows us of what the cavalier poets were to be capable. He combines in himself the influences of Jonson and Donne. He is classical in the attention he gives to the pruning and polishing of his verses, though the task we gather was one which did not come easy to him.

Contrasted with the Elizabethan poets he appears a little cold, but still at times we can discover the Elizabethan glow of imagination. His poetry is that of a courtier and love-poet, and of such a kind is the example before us, *The Inquiry*, which is a pleasantly woven conceit more reminiscent of the Elizabethan manner rather than the elaborate fantastic subtleties of the contemporary metaphysical school.

*A Tilt at Playwrights*

With some pot-fury ravish'd from their wit,  
They sit and muse on some no-vulgar writ :  
As frozen dung-hills in a winter's morn  
That void of vapours seem'd all befor'n,  
Soon as the sun sends out his piercing beams  
Exhale out filthy smoke and stinking steams,  
So doth the base and the fore-barren brain,  
Soon as the raging wine begins to reign.  
One higher pitch'd doth set his soaring thought  
On crown'd kings, that Fortune hath low brought :  
Or some uprear'd, high aspiring swain  
As it might be the Turkish Tamberlaine :  
Then weeneth he his base drunk-drowned spright  
Rapt to the threefold loft of heaven's height,  
When he conceives upon his feign'd stage  
The stalking steps of his great personage,  
Grac'd with huff-cap terms and thund'ring threats,  
That his poor hearer's hair quite upright sets.  
Such soon as some brave-minded hungry youth  
Sees fitly frame to his wide-strain'd mouth,  
He vaunts his voice upon an hir'd stage,  
With high-set steps, and princely carriage ;  
Now swooping in side robes of royalty,  
That erst did scrub in lowsy brokery,  
There if he can with terms Italiante  
Big-sounding sentences, and words of state,  
Fair patch me up his pure iambic verse,

*A Serious Ballad*

I love my king and country well,  
Religion and the laws,  
Which I'm mad at the heart that e'er we did sell  
To buy the good old cause.  
These unnatural wars  
And brotherly jars  
Are no delight or joy to me ;  
But it is my desire  
That the wars should expire  
And the king and his realms agree

I never yet did take up arms,  
And yet I dare to die ;  
But I'll not be seduc'd by fanatical charms  
Till I know the reason why  
Why the king and the state  
Should fall to debate  
I ne'er could yet a reason see,  
But I find many one  
Why the wars should be done  
And the king and his realms agree.

I love the King and the Parliament,  
But I love them both together ;  
And when they by division asunder are rent,  
I know 'tis good for neither .

Whichsoe'er of those  
 Be victorious,  
 I'm sure for us no good 'twill be,  
 For our plagues will increase  
 Unless we have peace  
 And the king and his realms agree

The king without them can't long stand,  
 Nor they without the king,  
 'Tis they must advise, and 'tis he must command,  
 For their power from his must spring  
 'Tis comfortless sway  
 Where none will obey,  
 If the king ha'n't right, which way shall we?  
 They may vote and make laws  
 But no good they will cause  
 Till the king and his realms agree

A pure religion I would have,  
 Not mixed with human wit;  
 And I cannot endure that each ignorant knave  
 Should dare to meddle with it  
 The tricks of the law  
 I would fain withdraw,  
 That it may be alike to each degree  
 And I fain would have such  
 As do meddle so much  
 With the king and the church agree.

We have prayed and paid that the wars might cease,  
 And we be free men made :  
 I would fight, if my fighting would bring any peace  
 But war has become a trade.  
 Our servants will ride  
 With swords by their side,  
 And made their masters foot-men be ,  
 But we'll be no more slaves  
 To the beggars and knaves,  
 Now the king and the realms do agree

*Ben Jonson's Sociable Rules for the Apollo*

Let none but guests or clubbers hither come,  
 Let dunces, fools, sad sordid men, keep home ;  
 Let learned, civil, merry men b' invited,  
 And modest too ; nor the choice ladies slighted.  
 Let nothing in the treat offend the guests ,  
 More for delight than cost prepare the feasts  
 The cook and purveyor must our palates know ,  
 And none contend who shall sit high or low.  
 Our waiters must quick-sighted be and dumb,  
 And let the drawers hear and come.  
 Let not our wine be mixed, but brisk and neat,  
 Or else the drinkers may the vintners beat.  
 And let our only emulation be,  
 Not drinking much, but talking wittily  
 Let it be voted lawful to stir up  
 Each other with a moderate chirping cup

Let not our company be, or talk, too much ;  
 On serious things or sacred let's not touch  
 With sated heads and bellies. Neither may  
 Fiddlers unasked obtrude themselves to play ,  
 With laughing, leaping, dancing, jests and songs,  
 And whate'er else to grateful mirth belongs,  
 Let's celebrate our feasts ; and let us see  
 That all our jests without reflection be.  
 Insipid poems let no man rehearse,  
 Nor any be compelled to write a verse  
 All noise of vain disputes must be forborne,  
 And let no lover in a corner mourn  
 To fight and brawl, like Hectors, let none dare,  
 Glasses or windows break, or hangings tear.  
 Whoe'er shall publish what's here done or said  
 From our society must be banishéd  
 Let none by drinking do or suffer harm,  
 And while we stay, let us be always warm

(A translation of Jonson's *Leges Convivales*)

## ALEXANDER BROME

We come now to that lively period in English history known to most of us as—The Age of Cavalier and Roundhead. Alexander Brome belongs to a group of writers who were hearty antagonists of the Puritan party. Satiric portraits of the Puritans were popular enough, and the following lines from John Cleveland's *The Puritan* were received with acclaim. He saw the Puritans thus:

With cozzing cough and hollow cheeks,  
To get new gatherings every week

In the poem before us we have a healthy and sane reaction to the conflicts of the time. Brome says sincerely:

These unnatural wars  
And brotherly jars  
Are no delight or joy to me—

and how sane is his further conviction:

I love the King and the Parliament,  
But I love them both together,  
And when they by division asunder are rent,  
I know 'tis good for neither

So here we have a poem reflecting with life and spirit the troubled conditions of the time. In the next illustration *Ben Jonson's Sociable Rules* we have a most interesting illustration of the convivial leisure of the Elizabethan literary world which was presided over by Ben Jonson who carried with him as much prestige as Dryden did in the convivial coffee-house life of the Restoration. It is a most admirable piece of advice for conduct and guidance of the manners of the club house, which the Elizabethan tavern, when frequented by men

ALEXANDER BROME

of talent and genius, became Who does not remember the famous lines of Herrick in honour of the meeting places frequented by the "Tribe of Ben"

Those lyric feasts  
Made at the Sun,  
The Dog, the Triple Tun,  
Where we such clusters had  
As made us nobly wild not mad

Says Brome in his poem

And let our only emulation be,  
Not drinking much, but talking wittily

Nor apparently will the company tolerate noise of vain disputes and above all

Let no lover in a corner mourn

It is a jolly piece and one providing most excellent advice, much of which sanity has penetrated to keep green and dignified the club-life of our own day



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### *The Marigold*

When with a serious musing I behold  
The grateful and obsequious marigold,  
How duly, every morning, she displays  
Her open breast, when Titan spreads his rays;  
How she observes him in his daily walk,  
Still bending towards him her tender stalk,  
How, when he down declines, she droops and  
  mourns,  
*Bedewed, as 'twere, with tears, till he returns;*  
And how she veils her flowers when he is gone,  
As if she scorned to be looked on  
By an inferior eye; or did contemn  
To wait upon a meaner light than him.  
When this I meditate, methinks the flowers  
Have spirits far more generous than ours,  
And give us fair examples, to despise  
The servile fawnings and idolatries  
Wherewith we court these earthly things below,  
Which merit not the service we bestow  
But, O my God! though grovelling I appear  
Upon the ground, and have a rooting here  
Which hales me downward, yet in my desire  
To that which is above me I aspire,  
And all my best affections I profess  
To him that is the Sun of Righteousness  
Oh! keep the morning of his incarnation,  
The burning noontide of his bitter passion,

GEORGE WITHER

The night of his descending, and the height  
Of his ascension, ever in my sight.  
That, imitating him in what I may,  
I never follow an inferior way.

(*A Collection of Emblems*, 1635)

GEORGE WITHER

George Wither continues the pastoral tradition but adds to it a new freshness. The English countryside has for him a genuine attraction, and there is evidence in his verse of a splendid faith in the healing power of nature. This element along with Vaughan's *The Retreat* prelude for us, far down the centuries though it is, the poetry of Wordsworth and his school. Such lines as the opening of *The Marigold* reveal at once put us in mind of Wordsworth's attitude to his *Daffodils* and how significant are the lines

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Which is paralleled in Vaughan

When on some gilded cloud, or flower,  
My gazing soul would dwell an hour  
And in those weaker glories spy  
Some shadows of eternity

Wither was an ardent puritan, but, however, with no desire to deride life's simple pleasures. His poem *Christmas* has been acclaimed as "one of the jolliest of the poems inspired by the season of roast turkey and other good cheer"

*The Vole*

This only grant me : that my means may lie  
Too low for envy, for contempt too high

Some honor I would have,  
Not from great deeds, but good alone :  
Th' ignote are better than ill-known.

Rumor can ope the grave.  
Acquaintance I would hug, but when 't depends  
Not from the number, but the choice of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,  
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.

My house a cottage more  
Than palace, and should fitting be  
For all my use, no luxury.

My garden painted o'er  
With nature's hand, not art's, and pleasures yield  
Horace might envy in his Sabine field

Thus would I double my life's fading space,  
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,  
These unbought sports and happy state  
I would not fear, nor wish my fate.

But boldly say each night,  
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,  
Or in clouds hide them, I have lived to-day

*The Wish*

Well then ; I now do plainly see  
 This busy world and I shall ne'er agree ;  
 The very honey of all earthly joy  
 Does of all meats the soonest cloy ;  
 And they, methinks, deserve my pity,  
 Who for it can endure the stings,  
 The crowd, and buz, and murmurings  
 Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to th' grave,  
 May I a small house and large garden have  
 And a few friends, and many books, both true,  
 Both wise, and both delightful too !  
 And since Love ne'er will from me flee,  
 A mistress moderately fair,  
 And good as guardian angels are,  
 Only beloved, and loving me !

*The Spring*

Though you be absent here, I needs must say,  
 The trees as beauteous are, and flowers as gay  
 As ever they were wont to be ;  
 Nay the bird's rural music too  
 Is as melodious and free,  
 As if they sung to pleasure you -  
 I saw a rose-bud ope this morn ; I'll swear  
 The blushing morning opened not more fair

*The Vote*

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How could it be so fair and you away?  
 How could the trees be beauteous, flowers so gay?  
 Could they remember but last year  
 How you did them, they you delight,  
 The sprouting leaves which saw you here,  
 And called their fellows to the sight,  
 Would, looking round for the same sight in vain,  
 Creep back into their silent barks again.

Where'er you walked, trees were as reverent made,  
 As when of old Gods dwelt in very shade  
 Is't possible they should not know,  
 What loss of honour they sustain,  
 That thus they smile and flourish now,  
 And still their former pride retain?  
 Dull creatures! 'tis not without cause that she,  
 Who fled the god of wit, was made a tree.

But who can blame them now? for since you're gone,  
 They're here the only fair, and shine alone,  
 You did their natural rights invade,  
 Wherever you did walk or sit,  
 The thickest boughs could make no shade,  
 Although the sun had *granted* it:  
 The fairest flowers could please no more, near you,  
 Than painted flowers set next to them, could do

## ABRAHAM COWLEY

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Cowley's name for the student of literature is possibly connected with the place he made for the Pindaric ode, the form of which seemed particularly congenial both to him and his age. The real value of Cowley's odes lies in the unique fact that to their example we owe the later magnificent essays in this form of Dryden, Gray, and Collins, a form, however, they succeeded in making peculiarly and individually their own. Without their aid it is doubtful if Wordsworth might have touched the pinnacle of his genius for us as in his *Immortality* ode.

Cowley, in spite of neglect by patrons for whom he had done so much, particularly for services rendered, personal and intimate, on behalf of the Stuart cause that money could not reckon or preferment liquidate, was undismayed. His natural buoyance appears to advantage in lines like these, from his ode on *Destiny*

With fate what boots it to contend?  
Such I began, such am and so must end  
The star that did my being frame  
Was but a lambent flame,  
And some small light it did dispense,  
But neither heat nor influence  
No matter, Cowley, let proud Fortune see  
That thou canst her despise no less than she does thee

The poets could take themselves quite as seriously in times of stirring upheavals as in piping times of peace. Much of Cowley's poetry is associated with a 'pedantic ingenuity' that the age approved so much, for though Dr. Donne might be in his grave his spirit was very much abroad.

But the poetry for which Cowley may best be remembered is 'the poetry of friendship'. Two very dear friends we know to have been Cowley's, the Catholic poet and mystic, Richard Crashaw, and William Hervey. To their memories we have two splendid elegies. Hervey was suddenly stricken from Cowley's side by a fever. The lines that Cowley writes seem almost

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an anticipation of those sad and lovely strains that Arnold has given us in *Thyrsis* and *The Scholar Gipsy*

Ye friends of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say  
Have ye not seen us walking everyday ?

Henceforth, ye gentle trees for ever fade,  
Or your sad branches thicker join  
And into darksome shades combine,  
Dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid

Lastly, to Cowley, England owes the pursuit of scientific knowledge, for he possessed a strong taste for physical science and was one of the founders of the *Royal Society*. He thus forms a most interesting link between two of the very greatest periods in the history of English literature—the Renaissance, and Modern Times

*The Daffodils*

Fair daffodils, we weep to see

    You haste away so soon ;

As yet the early rising sun

Has not attain'd his noon,

    Stay, stay

    Until the hasting day

    Has run

    But to the evensong ,

And, having pray'd together, we

    Will go with you along

We have as short a time to stay, as you,

    We have as short a spring ;

As quick a growth to meet decay,

    As you, or anything.

    We die

As your hours do, and dry

    Away

    Like to the summer's rain ;

Or as the pearls of morning's dew,

    Ne'er to be found again

*Oberon's Feast*

Shapcot ! to thee the Fairy State  
 I with discretion, dedicate  
 Because thou prizest things that are  
 Curious, and un-familiar,  
 Take first the feast ; these dishes gone ;  
 Well see the Fairy-Court anon  
 A little mushroome-table spread,  
 After short prayers, they set on bread ;  
 A Moon-parcht grain of purest wheat,  
 With some small glit'ring gritt, to eat  
 His choyce bitts with . then in a trice  
 They make a feast lesse great then nice  
 But all this while his eye is serv'd  
 We must not thinke his eare was sterv'd  
 But that there was in place to stir  
 His spleen, the chirring Grasshopper ;  
 The merry Cricket, puling fle,  
 The piping Gnat for minstralcye.  
 And now, we must imagine first,  
 The Elves present to quench his thirst  
 A pure seed-Pearle of Infant dew,  
 Brought and besweened in a blew  
 And pregnant violet ; which done,  
 His kitling eyes begin to runne  
 Quite through the table, where he spies  
 The hornes of paperne Butterflies .

Of which he eates, and tastes a little  
 Of that we call the Cuckoes spittle  
 A little Fux-ball pudding stands  
 By, yet not blessed by his hands,  
 That was too coorse ; but then forthwith  
 He ventures boldly on the pith  
 Of sugred Rush, and eates the sagge  
 Gladding his pallat with some store  
 Of Emits eggs ; what wo'd he more ?  
 But Beards of Mice, a Newt's stew'd thigh,  
 A bloated Earewig, and a Flie ,  
 With the Red-capt worme, that's shut  
 Within the concave of a Nut,  
 Browne as his Tooth A little Moth,  
 Late fatned in a piece of cloth  
 With withered cherries , Mandrakes eares ,  
 Moles eyes ; to these, the slain-Stags teares  
 The unctuous dewlaps of a Snail ,  
 The broke-heart of a Nightingale  
 Ore-come in musicke ; with a wine,  
 Ne're ravisht from the flattering Vine,  
 But gently prest from the soft side  
 Of the most sweet and dainty Bride  
 Brought in a dainty daizie, which  
 He fully quaffs up to bewitch  
 His blood to height ; this done, commended  
 Grace by his Priest , *The feast is ended.*



*To Phillis to Love, And Live with Him*

Live, live with me, and thou shalt see  
 The pleasures I'll prepare for thee ;  
 What sweets the Country can afford  
 Shall bless thy Bed, and bless thy Board  
 The soft sweet Moss shall be thy bed,  
 With crawling Woodbine over-spread :  
 By which the silver-shedding streams  
 Shall gently melt thee into dreams  
 Thy clothing next, shall be a Gown  
 Made of the Fleeces purest Down  
 The tongues of Kids shall be thy meat ;  
 Their Milk thy drink ; and thou shalt eat  
 The Paste of Filberts for thy bread  
 With Cream of Cowslips buttered .  
 Thy Feasting-Tables shall be Hills  
 With *Daisies* spread and *Daffadils* ;  
 Where thou shall sit, and Red-breast by,  
 For meat, shall give thee melody.  
 I'll give thee Chains and Carcanets  
 Of *Primroses* and *Violets*  
 A Bag and Bottle thou shalt have ;  
 That richly wrought, and This as brave ;  
 So that as either shall express  
 The Wearer's no mean Shepherdess.  
 At *Shearing-times*, and yearly *Wakes*,  
 When *Themelis* his pastime makes,  
 There thou shalt be : and be the wit.

Nay more, the Feast, and grace of it  
 On Holy-days, when Virgins meet  
 To dance the Hays with nimble feet :  
 Thou shalt come forth, and then appear  
 The *Queen of Roses* for that year  
 And having danc't ('bove all the best).  
 Carry the Garland from the rest  
 In Wicker-baskets Maids shall bring  
 To thee (my dearest Shepharling)  
 The blushing Apple, bashful Pear.  
 And shame-fac't Plum (all simp'ring there)  
 Walk in the Groves, and thou shalt find  
 The name of *Phillis* in the Rind  
 Of every straight, and smooth-skin tree .  
 Were kissing that, I'll twice kiss thee.  
 To thee a Sheep-hook I will send.  
 Be-pranckt with Ribbands, to this end,  
 This, the alluring Hook might be  
 Less for to catch a sheep, then me  
 Thou shalt have Possets, Wassails fine,  
 Not made of Ale, but spiced Wine :  
 To make thy Maids and self free mirth,  
 All sitting near the glitt'ring Hearth  
 Thou sha't have Ribbands, Roses, Rings,  
 Gloves, Garters, Stockings, Shoes, and Strings  
 Of winning Colours, that shall move  
 Others to Lust, but me to Love.  
 These (nay) and more, thine own shall be,  
 If thou wilt love, and live with me.

*Satan's Recovery From His Downfall*

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior Fiend  
Was moving toward the shore, his ponderous shield  
Behind him cast ; the broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
Through optick glass the *Tuscan* artist views  
At evening from the top of *Fesole*  
Or in *Voldarno*, to descry new lands,  
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe  
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on *Norwegian Hills*, to be the mast  
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,  
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps  
Over the burning marle, not like those steps  
On Heaven's azure , and the torrid clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire  
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach  
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd  
His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay entranc'd  
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In *Vallombrosa*, where the *Etrurian* shades,  
High over-arch'd, embower ; or scatter'd sedge  
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd  
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
*Busiris* and his *Memphian* chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
The sojourners of *Goshen*, who beheld  
From the safe shore their floating carcasses

And broken chariot wheels : so thick bestrown,  
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,  
 Under amazement of their hideous change.  
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep  
 Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
 Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,  
 If such astonishment as this can seize  
 Eternal Spirits ; or have ye chosen this place  
 After the toil of battle to repose  
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find  
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven ?  
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
 To adore the conqueror ? who now beholds  
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood,  
 With scatter'd arms and ensigns , till anon  
 His swift pursuers from heaven gates discern  
 The advantage, and, descending, tread us down,  
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf  
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen !

*Song from Arcades*

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more,  
 By sandy Ladon's lilyed banks ;  
 On old Lycaeus, or Cyllene hoar  
 Trip no more in twilight ranks .

Though Erymanth your loss deplore  
A better soil shall give ye thanks  
From the stony Maenalus  
Bring your flocks, and live with us ,  
Here ye shall have greater grace,  
To serve the Lady of this place  
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,  
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.  
Such a rural Queen  
All Aracadia hath not seen

*The Land of Eternal Summer*

Iris there with humid bow  
 Waters the odorous banks, that blow  
 Flowers of more mingled hue  
 Than her purpled scarf can shew,  
 And drenches with Elysian dew  
 (List, mortals, if your ears be true)  
 Beds of hyacinth and roses,  
 Where young Adonis oft reposes,  
 Waxing well of his deep wound,  
 In slumber soft, and on the ground  
 Sadly sits the Assyrian queen,  
 But far above, in spangled sheen,  
 Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced  
 Holds his dear Psyche, sweet entranced,  
 After her wandering labours long,  
 Till free consent the gods among  
 Makes her eternal bride,  
 And from her fair unspotted side  
 Two blissful twins are born,  
 Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn  
 But now my task is smoothly done.  
 I can fly, or I can run  
 Quickly to the green earth's end,  
 Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,  
 And from thence can soar as soon  
 To the corners of the moon  
 Mortals, that would follow me,  
 Love Virtue: she alone is free.  
 She can teach ye how to climb

## JOHN MILTON

morning with a sheet of *Paradise Lost*, wet from the press, in his hand, and being asked what he was reading answered "Part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language, or in any age."

Milton parted with that 'noblest poem' to a certain Samuel Simmons in 1667, though the work was finished in 1665, for an edition limited to 1300 copies, for £5. With the publication of *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, part III of Milton's life concludes. The life divides conveniently into three parts. There was good poetry in part I; part II is the prose division filled with bitter pamphlets, including one against the laws of marriage—his domestic life had not been happy—and the terrible *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*.

Part I for many still commands the most fascination if one is disinclined to linger with austained prodigious moods of epic seriousness and magnificence. It is in part I that we find John Milton true heir to 'sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child'. The early Milton is as interesting as the early Keats and is as revealing in ardours and intentions. In both we find the firm resolve of the young men to dedicate themselves to the service of 'divine poesy' with a neophytic zeal. At this period Milton is rather a puzzle for the student who has made recent acquaintance with those vexed terms *romantic* and *classic*. But there can be little mistaking this

"sing of secret things that came to pass  
When beldame Nature in her cradle was,  
And last of kings, and queens and heroes old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn songs at King Alcinous' feast,

That surely is a far cry from the blind austere mentor of Bunhill Fields!

Part I we find filled with a mood of springtime, youth amorous and gay, feasting gloriously on the varied fare spread before the mind from the rare produce of Greece and Rome. Milton affords the unique anomaly of a man whose culture was incomparable and well nigh impeccable, a man "steeped

JOHN MILTON

Higher than the sphery chime ;  
Or if Virtue feeble were  
Heaven itself would stoop to her

(*Epilogue from Comus*)

JOHN MILTON

In the minds of many the name of Milton conjures a vision of a rather 'heavy father' who brought his daughters much trial and tribulation by inviting them, willy nilly, to tiresome sessions almost at any hour of the day, or night, with the high chivalry of Heaven and the aristocracy of Hell. A nearly contemporary writer has left us an account of the manner of composition of *Paradise Lost* ; it is however not a model to be followed by the very young. Here it is : " he frequently composed lying a-bed in a morning, and that when he could not sleep, but lay awake whole nights, he tried, but not one verse could he make, while at other times flowed easy his unpremeditated verse, with a certain impetus, then, at what hour soever, he rung for his daughter to secure what came " The case of the daughters is interesting. They were never sent to school but brought up at home, and they seemed quite early to be dedicated solely to their father's service. Deborah, the earliest to quit the family circle, at the end of a long life tells how " she and her sisters used to read to their father in eight languages, which by practice they were capable of doing with great readiness and accuracy, though they understood no language but English, and their father used often to say, in their hearing, one tongue was enough for a woman "

We are often too apt to forget the means whereby genius is brought to fruition, and the debt posterity owes to these daughters of a blind old father has never been assessed. That the unrelieved selfishness of a super egotist hung like a shadow over much of the life at Bunhill Fields few will be able to dispute. Almost we could enquire was it not too great a price to pay, even for that moment when Denham coming into the House of Commons one



morning with a sheet of *Paradise Lost*, wet from the press, in his hand, and being asked what he was reading answered: "Part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language, or in any age."

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in the classical tradition reflected through the poetry and scholarship of the Renaissance yet radiantly English". Of his Muse at this time well might it be said

Such a *rural Queen*  
All Arcadia hath not seen

To what romantic lengths that classical erudition could be put, at times as to rival even Swinburne, this may show

"Now too the Satyrs, in the dusk of eve,  
Their mazy dance through flowery meadows weave,  
And neither god nor goat, but both in kind,  
*Silvanus, wreathed in cypress, skips behind*"

It is all rather like a back-cloth for an arabesque of Giulio Romano,\* or a Keatsian pastoral

What a strange contradiction then it seems we have in this riddle of the fully equipped Renaissance man, whose knowledge and practice in other tongues, including Hebrew and Syriac, was as profound as his own, mingling with the uncompromising Puritan of the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*

But the skein is not so hard to unravel as it seems. The truth is that Milton possessed a mind and a vision that could never have suffered the blinkers of fanatic zeal. In matters of religion he might be "a dissenter from the Church of England, but in the latter part of his life he was not a professed member of any particular sect of Christians; he then frequented no public worship, and is said not to have used any religious rites in his family".

What exactly Milton thought of the theological pedant and dogmatist may best be seen in the pamphlet of *Prelatical Episcopacy*. "It came into my thoughts to persuade myself, setting all distances and nice respects aside, that I could do religion and my country no better service for the time than doing

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\*Italian baroque painter

## JOHN MILTON

my utmost endeavour to recall the people of God from their vain foraging after straw and to reduce them to their firm stations under the standard of the gospel, by making appear to them, first the insufficiency next the inconvenience, and lastly the impiety of these gay testimonies that their great doctors would bring them to dote on "

The answer to the riddle then is simply this " Behind the Puritan was the son of the Italian Renaissance, equal to, if not surpassing, the finest minds of that movement "

*The Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn*

The wanton troopers riding by  
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.  
Ungentle men! they cannot thrive  
Who killed thee, Thou never didst alive  
Them any harm, alas! nor could  
Thy death yet do them any good  
I'm sure I never wished them ill;  
Nor do I for all this, nor will  
But if my simple prayers may yet  
Prevail with Heaven to forget  
Thy murder, I will join my tears,  
Rather than fail. But O my fears!  
It cannot die so Heaven's king  
Keeps register of everything,  
And nothing may we use in vain;  
Even beasts must be with justice slain,  
Else men are made their deodands.  
Though they should wash their guilty hands  
In this warm life-blood which doth part  
From thine, and wound me to the heart,  
Yet could they not be clean, their stain  
Is dyed in such a purple grain  
There is not such another in  
The world, to offer for their sin  
Unconstant Sylvio, when yet  
I had not found him counterfeit,  
One morning (I remember well).

Tied in this silver chain and bell,  
 Gave it to me : nay, and I know  
 What he said then, I'm sure I do  
 Said he, " Look how your huntsman here  
 Hath taught a fawn to hunt his deer".  
 But Sylvio soon had me beguiled,  
 This waxed tame, while he grew wild,  
 And quite regardless of my smart,  
 Left me his fawn, but took his heart

Thenceforth I set myself to play  
 My solitary time away  
 With this ; and, very well content,  
 Could so mine idle life have spent,  
 For it was full of sport, and light  
 Of foot and heart, and did invite  
 Me to its game it seemed to bless  
 Itself in me ; how could I less  
 Than love it ? O, I cannot be  
 Unkind to a beast that loveth me

Had it lived long, I do not know  
 Whether it too might have done so  
 As Sylvio did ; his gifts might be  
 Perhaps as false, or more, than he,  
 But I am sure, for aught that I  
 Could in so short a time espy,  
 Thy love was far more better than  
 The love of false and cruel men.

With sweetest milk and sugar first  
 I it at my own fingers nursed ;

And as it grew, so every day  
 It waxed more white and sweet than they.  
 It had so sweet a breath I And oft  
 I blushed to see its foot more soft  
 And white, shall I say than my hand?  
 Nay, any lady's of the land.

It is a wondrous thing how fleet  
 'Twas on those little silver feet;  
 With what a pretty skipping grace  
 It oft would challenge me the race;  
 And, when't had left me far away,  
 'Twould stay, and run again, and stay,  
 For it was nimbler much than hinds,  
 And trod as if on the four winds

I have a garden of my own,  
 But so with roses overgrown,  
 And lilies, that you would it guess  
 To be a little wilderness;  
 And all the *spring-time* of the year  
 It only loved to be there  
 Among the beds of lilies I  
 Have sought it oft, where it should lie,  
 Yet could not, till itself would rise,  
 Find it, although before mine eyes;  
 For, in the flaxen lilies' shade,  
 It like a bank of lilies laid  
 Upon the roses it would feed.  
 Until its lips e'en seem to bleed

And then to me 'twould boldly trip,  
 And print those roses on my lip.  
 But all its chief delight was still  
 On roses thus itself to fill,  
 And its pure virgin limbs to fold  
 In whitest sheets of lilies cold,  
 Had it lived long, it would have been  
 Lilies without, roses within

O, help ! O help ! I see it faint  
 And die as calmly as a saint !  
 See how it weeps ! the tears do come  
 Sad, slowly, dropping like a gum  
 So weeps the wounded balsam, so  
 The holy frankincense doth flow,  
 The brotherless Heliades  
 Melt in such amber tears as these

I in a golden vial will  
 Keep these two crystal tears, and fill  
 It till it do o'erflow with mine,  
 Then place it in Diana's shrine

Now my sweet fawn is vanished to  
 Wither the swans and turtles go.  
 In fair Elysium to endure,  
 With milk-like lambs, and ermines pure  
 O do not run too fast, for I  
 Will but bespeak thy grave, and die.

First, my unhappy statue shall  
 Be cut in marble, and withal,  
 Let it be weeping too, but there

The engraver sure his art may spare ;  
 For I so truly thee bemoan,  
 That I shall weep, though I be stone,  
 Until my tears, still dropping, wear  
 My breast, themselves engraving there .  
 There at my feet shalt thou be laid,  
 Of purest alabaster made ;  
 For I would have thine image be  
 White as I can, though not as thee

*To His Coy Mistress*

Had we but world enough, and time,  
 This coyness, lady, were no crime.  
 We should sit down and think which way  
 To walk, and pass our long love's day,  
 Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
 Shouldst rubies find, I by the tide  
 Of Humber would complain I would  
 Love you ten years before the Flood ;  
 And you should, if you please, refuse  
 Till the conversion of the Jews  
 My vegetable love should grow  
 Vaster than empires, and more slow  
 An hundred years should go to praise  
 Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze :  
 Two hundred to adore each breast,  
 But thirty thousand to the rest ,  
 An age at least to every part,



And the last age should show your heart.  
 For, lady, you deserve this state,  
 Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear  
 Time's winged chariot hurrying near ;  
 And yonder all before us lie  
 Deserts of vast eternity.  
 Thy beauty shall no more be found  
 Nor in thy marble vault shall sound  
 My echoing song ; then worms shall try  
 That long preserved virginity,  
 And your quaint honour turn to dust,  
 And into ashes all my lust  
 The grave's a fine and private place,  
 But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue  
 Sits on thy skin like morning dew,  
 And while thy willing soul transpires  
 At every pore with instant fires,  
 Now let us sport us while we may,  
 And now, like am'rous birds of prey,  
 Rather at once our time devour,  
 Than languish in his slow-chapped power,  
 Let us roll all our strength, and all  
 Our sweetness, up into one ball.  
 And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
 Through the iron gates of life  
 Thus, though we cannot make our sun  
 Stand still, yet we will make him run.

## ANDREW MARVELL

Here we have another poet who in his love of Nature anticipates the Lake Poets. He was Milton's assistant, Latin Secretary to the Privy Council during the triumph of the Puritan cause, and a great supporter of religion and political freedom. Marvell was, of all the Puritan men of letters, the one most endowed with catholicity of mind—"Marvell, in fact, was a Cavalier poet with a Puritan conscience." Marvell leaves us much verse, amatory and satirical. The outdoor world is Marvell's special favour, fields, woods, and gardens. Some of his most delicious poetry was written on these themes during his stay at Appleton House the lovely home of the Fairfax family to whom he was tutor. He can walk in a garden, and the result is thus

See how the flowers, as at parade,  
Under their colours stand displayed,  
Each regiment in order grows,  
That of the tulip, pink, and rose

*The Nymph Complaining* is one of Marvell's most famous poems. Of it a modern critic has said: "The poem's mystical feeling for the rights of animals is very rare in any age. In our age it is only expressed by these great poets—Thomas Hardy, W. H. Davies and Ralph Hodgson."

Of such a grace as this the Ancient Mariner had read, and found, but not in time

"It was full of sport and light  
Of foot and heart, and did invite  
Me to its game: it seemed to bless  
Itself in me. how could I less  
Than love it? O, I cannot be  
Unkind to a beast that loveth me

*The Character of Hudibras*

When Civil dudgeon first grew high,  
And men fell out they knew not why ;  
When hard words, jealousies and fears,  
Set folks together by the ears,  
When gospel-trumpeter surrounded  
With long-ear'd rout to battle sounded,  
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,  
Was beat with fist, instead of a stick :  
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling  
And out he rode a-colonelling

A wight he was, whose very sight wou'd  
Intitle him, *Mirroure of Knighthood* ;  
That never bow'd his stubborn knee  
To any thing but chivalry ,  
Nor put up blow, but that which laid  
Right Worshipful on shoulder-blade :  
Chief of domestic knights and errant,  
Either for chartel or for warrant :  
Great in the bench, great in the saddle,  
That could as well bind o'er as swaddle :  
Mighty he was at both of these  
And styl'd of *war*, as well as *peace*,  
(So some rats, of amphibious nature,  
Are either for the land or water)  
But here our authors make a doubt  
Whether he were more wise or stout,  
Some hold the one, and some the other :

But howsoe'er they make a pother,  
 The difference was so small his brain  
 Outweigh'd his age but half a grain;  
 Which made some take him for a tool  
 That knaves do work with, call'd a *fool*.  
 For't has been held by many, that  
 As Montaigne, playing with his cat,  
 Complains she thought him but an ass  
 Much more she would Sir Hudibras  
 (For that the name our valient\* Knight  
 To all his challenges did write)  
 But they're mistaken very much,  
 'T is plain enough he was no such  
 We grant although he had much wit,  
 H' was very shy of using it;  
 As being loth to wear it out,  
 And therefore bore it not about  
 Unless on holidays, or so,  
 As men their best apparel do  
 Besides, 't is known he could speak Greek  
 As naturally as pigs squeak  
 That Latin was no more difficile,  
 Than for a blackbird 't is to whistle.  
 B'ing rich in both, he never scant'd  
 His bounty unto such as wanted,  
 But much of either would afford  
 To many that had not one word

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\* The original spelling has been maintained in this and some other texts

He was in logic a great critic,  
 Profoundly skill'd in analytic ;  
 He could distinguish, and divide  
 A hair 'twixt south and south west side ;  
 On either which he could dispute,  
 Confute, change hands, and still confute ;  
 He'd undertake to prove by force  
 Of argument, a man's no horse ;  
 He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,  
 And that a lord may be an owl ;  
 A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,  
 And rooks committee-men and trustees,  
 He'd run in debt by disputation,  
 And pay with ratiocination .  
 All this by syllogism, true  
 In mood and figure, he would do  
 In mathematics he was greater  
 Than Tycho Brahe, or Erra Pater\*  
 For he, by geometric scale,  
 Could take the size of pots of ale ;  
 Resolve by sines and tangents, straight,  
 If bread and butter wanted weight ,  
 And wisely tell what hour o' th' day  
 The clock does strike by algebra  
 Besides, he was a shrewd philosopher,  
 And had read ev'ry text and gloss over .  
 Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,  
 He understood b' implicit faith

---

\*A Jewish doctor to whom various astronomical works were ascribed

Whatever sceptic could inquire for,  
 For every *why* he had a *wherefore*,  
 Knew more than forty of them do,  
 As far as words and terms could go  
 All which he understood by rote  
 And as occasion serv'd, would quote ·  
 No matter whether right or wrong,  
 His notions fitted things so well,  
 That which was which he could not tell ;  
 But oftentimes mistook the one  
 For th' other, as great clerks have done.  
 He cou'd reduce all things to acts,  
 And knew their natures by abstracts ;  
 Where entity and quiddity,  
 The ghosts of defunct bodies, fly ;  
 Where Truth in persons does appear,  
 Like words congeal'd in northern air.  
 He knew what's what, and that's as high  
 As metaphysic wit can fly.  
 In school divinity as able,  
 As he that high, Irrefragable ;  
 A second Thomas, or at once  
 To name them all, another Duns ·  
 Profound in all the Nominal  
 And real ways beyond them all ;  
 For he a rope of sand could twist  
 As tough as a learned Sorbonist :  
 And weave fine cobwebs, fit for scull :  
 That's empty when the moon is full ·

Such as lodging in a head  
 That's to be let unfurnished.  
 He could raise scruples dark and nice,  
 And after solve 'em in a trice,  
 As if divinity had catch'd  
 The itch, on purpose to be scratch'd ;  
 Or, like a mountebank, did wound  
 And stab herself with doubts profound,  
 Only to show with how small pain  
 The sores of faith are cur'd again ;  
 Although by woful proof we find,  
 They always leave a scar behind  
 He knew the seat of paradise,  
 Cou'd tell in what degree it lies ,  
 And, as he was dispos'd could prove it,  
 Below the moon, or else above it

\* \* \*

Who first made music malleable ;  
 Whether the serpent, at the fall,  
 Had cloven feet, or none at all ,  
 All this without a gloss or comment,  
 He could unriddle in a moment,  
 In proper terms such as men smatter,  
 When they throw out and miss the matter.  
 For his religion it was fit  
 To match his learning and his wit ;  
 'Twas Presbyterian true blue,  
 For he was of that stubborn crew  
 Of errant saints, whom all men grant

To be the true church militant :  
 Such as do build their faith upon  
 The holy text of pike and gun ,  
 Decide all controversies by  
 Infallible artillery ;  
 And prove their doctrine orthodox  
 By apostolic blows and knocks ;  
 Call fire, and sword, and desolation,  
 A godly thorough reformation,  
 Which always must be carried on,  
 And still be doing, never done .  
 As if religion were intended  
 For nothing else but to be mended,  
 A sect whose chief devotion lies  
 In odd perverse antipathies .  
 In falling out with that or this,  
 And finding out somewhat amiss  
 More peevish, cross, and splenetic,  
 Than dog distract, or monkey sick  
 That with more care keep holiday  
 The wrong, than others the right way .  
 Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,  
 By damning those they have no mind to.  
 Still so perverse and opposite,  
 As if they worshipp'd God for spite.  
 The self-same thing they will abhor  
 One way, and long another for.  
 Free-will they one way disavow,  
 Another, nothing else allow.



SAMUEL BUTLER

## SAMUEL BUTLER

To dip into Samuel Butler is still to be rewarded with things that retain a freshness and a savour that is quite surprising when we consider the distance in point of time from "that godly thorough reformation".

Wherein lies the secret of this savour, that even now we find it to be 'great fun'? It lies, might well be answered in the scorn and ridicule it pours on that universal human failing, one least desirable if manhood and nobility can still count for anything—hypocrisy.

In spite of Dryden's opinion to the contrary Butler in choosing the octosyllabic couplet for his satire knew perfectly well that he was doing the very best he could for ensuring swift movement to his quips and sallies against those strange beings who having had the *Authorized Version* of the Bible placed in their hands grasped it as a mighty weapon whose powers must ever be exerted for the confusion and extermination of the sons of *Belial*. No one should forget that his hero belonged to—

that stubborn crew  
Of errant saints, whom all men grant  
To be the true church militant.

Cervantes, the famous author of *Don Quixote*, and the French comic and satiric poet Scarron, may both be said to have supplied their quota towards the germination of Butler's *Hudibras*.

Butler's attitude to the religious zeal of his time is one that is never in danger of losing a proper sense of values. By inclination his own opinion could not do less than stir a kind of middle course that was neither per-fervid pietist nor high-flying Cavalier, and from which the personal element was kept entirely absent. "He was evidently a born satirist, whose satire was not like Dryden's, merely one development of an almost universal faculty of literary craftsmanship; not, like Swift's later, a vain attempt to relieve the passionate melancholy and the 'savage indignation' excited by the riddles of the painful earth."

## SAMUEL BUTLER

The framework of *Hudibras* is briefly this: *Hudibras*, the Presbyterian Quixote, along with *Ralpho*, for his Sancho, through whom Butler caricatures the Independents, goes 'a-colonelling'. Much of the entertainment that follows is of course due to the wordy duels between *Hudibras* and his squire *Ralpho*, in which the rift existing between Presbiters and Independents is given many a humorous twist and turn. But the poem is something more than a mere parody of puritan foibles. "it is a mine of human folly almost as rich, if not as cheerful, as Rabelais' burlesque epic, which largely inspired Butler, almost as complete and final as Swift's *Tale of a Tub* which was in many respects a continuation of Butler's mockery."

*The Angler's Wish*

I in these flowery meads would be ;  
 These crystal streams should solace me ,  
 To whose harmonious bubbling noise,  
 I with my angle will rejoice ,  
 Sit here, and see the turtle-dove  
 Court his chaste mate to acts of love,

Or on that bank feel the west wind  
 Breathe health and plenty ; please my mind  
 To see sweet dew-drops kiss these flowers,  
 And then wash'd off by April showers ;  
 Here, hear my Kenna\* sing a song ,  
 There, see a blackbird feed her young,

Or, a laverock build her nest  
 Here, give my weary spirits rest,  
 And raise my low-pitch'd thoughts above  
 Earth, or what poor mortals love  
 Thus, free from lawsuits and the noise  
 Of princes' courts, I would rejoice.

Or, with my Bryan and a book,  
 Loiter long days near Shawford brook ,  
 There sit with him, and eat my meat,  
 There see the sun both rise and set,  
 There bid good morning to each day,  
 There meditate my time away,

---

\*An allusion to his wife whose name was Anne Ken

## IZAACK WALTON

And angle on : and beg to have  
A quiet passage to a welcome grave.

## IZAACK WALTON

It is astonishing how green the Muse of Walton is for those who can still snatch a moment away into the heart of England exchanging for the heat and grime of vexed cities the pure air of hollyhocked lanes in summer's advent. He who still treasures his soul carefully perchance may hear at midnight "the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of the nightingale's voice" and be lifted above the earth to exclaim as Walton did of old, saying "Lord, what music hast thou provided for the Saints in Heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on Earth!" But it must be understood that the more mundane things of earth equally appealed to Master Izaak Walton. If there was one thing more than another that caused the blood to pulse a richer red it was a good honest ale-house. To understand our friends we should understand the very turn of their voices. Let then Master Izaak have grace of us

"Peter and Coridon and I have not had an unpleasant day, and yet I have caught but five trouts, for, indeed, we went to a good honest alehouse, and there we played shovel-board half the day; all the time that it rained we were there, and as merry as they that fished, and I am glad we are now with a dry house over our heads; for, hark! how it rains and blows. Come, hostess, give us more ale, and our supper with what haste you may and when we have supped, let us have your song, Piscator, and the catch that your scholar promised us, or else, Coridon will be dogged."

This author who lived in a time of interminable alarms and excursions, occupies a place unique and apart from his brother writers, Cavalier or Puritan. Professor Saintsbury has questioned whether he had any literary art. "His charm," he says, "is exactly that of the conversation of one of the rare children who from time to time concentrate the charms of childhood." Whatever it may be it is certain that we need not feel we have done injury to Time for loitering in such company, even "long days near Shawford brook."

*Go, Lovely Rose*

Go, lovely Rose !  
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows,  
When I resemble her to thee,  
How sweet, and fair, she seems to be

Tell her that's young,  
And shuns to have her graces spy'd,  
That had'st thou sprung  
In deserts where no men abide,  
Thou must have uncommended dy'd.

Small is the worth  
Of beauty from the light retir'd  
Bid her come forth,  
Suffer herself to be desir'd,  
And not blush so to be admir'd

Then die ! that she  
The common fate of all things rare  
May read in thee ;  
How small a part of time they share  
That are so wondrous sweet and fair !

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The poetry of Edmund Waller affords one of the most interesting  
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*Of the Child with the Bird at the Bush*

My little bird, how canst thou sit  
And sing amidst so many thorns?  
Let me but hold upon thee get,  
My love with honour thee adorns

Thou art at present little worth,  
Five farthings none will give for thee;  
But prithee, little bird, come forth,  
Thou of more value art to me.

'Tis true it is sun-shine to-day,  
To-morrow birds will have a storm;  
My pretty one, come thou away,  
My bosom then shall keep thee warm.

Thou subject art to cold o' nights,  
When darkness is thy covering,  
At days the danger's great by kites,  
How canst thou then sit there and sing?

The food is scarce and scanty too,  
'Tis worms and trash which thou dost eat:  
Thy present state I pity do,  
Come, I'll provide thee better meat

I'll feed thee with white bread and milk,  
And sugar-plums, if them thou crave;  
I'll cover thee with finest silk  
That from the cold I may thee save



JOHN BUNYAN

My father's palace shall be thine,

Yea, in it thou shalt sit and sing ;

My little bird, if thou'lt be mine,

The whole year round shall be thy spring

I'll teach thee all the notes at court ;

Unthought-of music thou shalt play ,

And all that thither do resort

Shall praise thee for it every day

I'll keep thee safe from cat and cur,

No manner o' harm shall come to thee

Yea, I will be thy succourer,

My bosom shall thy cabin be

But lo ! behold, the bird is gone ,

These charmings would not make her yield

The child's left at the bush alone,

The bird flies yonder o'er the field

*(A book for Boys and Girls, 1686).*

JOHN BUNYAN

Of John Bunyan the travelling tinker, who with the help of his reading of the English Bible created some of the finest English prose given to the world as *Pilgrim's Progress*, we have heard, and some of us have read, but of John Bunyan poet, few of us have heard, and fewer read. We are told that he "lived with the scriptures alone, indifferent to every production of the human mind, occupied only with the quest for means of salvation." The poem before us suggests Bunyan's early browsings extended rather further than the

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*(A book for Boys and Girls, 1686).*

JOHN BUNYAN

Of John Bunyan the travelling tinker, who with the help of his reading of the English Bible created some of the finest English prose given to the world as *Pilgrim's Progress*, we have heard, and some of us have read, but of John Bunyan poet, few of us have heard, and fewer read. We are told that he "lived with the scriptures alone, indifferent to every production of the human mind, occupied only with the quest for means of salvation." The poem before us suggests Bunyan's early browsings extended rather further than the

# JOHN BUNYAN

sacred Marlowe's *Come Live With Me* bred a succession of happy imitations, one we have met before in Barnfield's *Daphnis to Chloe*; while many will be familiar with Raleigh's and Walton's renderings. Can we call such echoes as these entirely unsuggested?

I'll feed thee with white bread and milk,  
And sugar-plums, if them thou crave;  
I'll cover thee with finest silk,  
That from the cold I may thee save

My father's palace shall be thine,  
Yea, in it thou shalt sit and sing.  
My little bird, if thou'lt be mine,  
The whole year round shall be thy spring.

Whatever it may be, we have a charming poem here that does not preclude the thought that had the times been less harsh, less occupied with bigotry and persecution, a side of Bunyan might have seen development of which this is regretfully all too brief a glimpse

HENRY VAUGHAN

Is drunk, and staggers in the way !  
Some men a forward motion love,  
But I backward steps would move,  
And when this dust falls to the urn,  
In that state I came, return.

*The World*

I

I saw Eternity the other night,  
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,  
All calm, as it was bright ;  
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,  
    Driv'n by the spheres  
Like a vast shadow mov'd ; in which the world  
    And all her train were hurl'd.  
The doting lover in his quaintest strain  
    Did there complain ;  
Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,  
    Wit's sour delights ;  
With gloves, and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,  
    Yet his dear treasure,  
All scatter'd lay, while he his eyes did pour  
    Upon a flow'r.

II

The darksome statesman, hung with weight and woe,  
Like a thick midnight-fog, mov'd there so slow,  
    He did not stay, nor go ;

HENRY VAUGHAN

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,  
And sing, and weep, soar'd up into the ring ;

But most would use no wing.

O fools—said I—thus to prefer dark night  
Before true light !

To live in grotts and caves, and hate the day  
Because it shows the way ;

The way, which from this dead and dark abode  
Leads up to God ;

A way where you might tread the sun, and be  
More bright than he !

But as I did their madness so discuss,  
One whisper'd thus,

“ This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide,  
But for His bride.”

HENRY VAUGHAN

In *The Retreat* we have a retrospective vision of childhood which strangely and beautifully anticipates Wordsworth

Happy those early days, when I  
Shin'd in my angel-infancy !

It has been truly said that Vaughan does not pray within a church like Herbert but beneath the open sky The more we read of Vaughan the more we are compelled to admit him to the sacred brotherhood of the mystics In English poetry we can find lines only paralleled in the celestial broodings of Blake, lines such as these where the memory of his friends

Glow and glitters in my lonely breast  
Like stars upon some gloomy grove

## HENRY VAUGHAN

This is the mood of ecstasy, of inspired brooding that has been made familiar to us through the mystics in all countries. The mood is common through East and West, in Italy as well as India. Uneven in quality though the verse of Vaughan is, yet it yields many pearls and is more musical than that of Herbert "less reasoning, with a mysticism more fluid, a warmer imagination." How musical at times his muse can be this will show, where he speaks of his youth's follies:

Let it suffice, my warmer days  
Simper'd and shin'd on you:  
Twist not my cypress with your bays,  
Or roses with my yew

and what beautiful symbolism is here

Let nightingales attend the spring  
Winter is all my year

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*O Love, I am thy Thrall*

I

O love, I am thy thrall  
As on the tulip's burning petal glows  
A spot yet more intense, of deeper dye,  
So in my heart a flower of passion blows.  
See the dark stain of its intensity,  
Deeper than all

This is my pride—  
That I the rose of all the world have sought,  
And, still unwearied in the eager quest,  
Fainted nor failed have I, and murmured not,  
Thus is my head exalted o'er the rest,  
My turban glorified.

O blessed pain,  
O precious grief I keep, and sweet unrest,  
Desire that dies not, longing past control !  
My heart is torn to pieces in my breast.  
And for the shining diamond of the soul  
I pine in vain

Behold the light  
That from Thy torch of mercy comes to bless  
The garden of my heart, Beloved one,  
With the white radiance of its loveliness,  
Till my wall's shadow shall outvie the sun,  
And seem more bright

I humbly sit apart ;  
 The Kaaba courts the true believers tread,  
 I dwell outside, nor mix my praise with theirs ;  
 Yet every fibre of my sacred thread  
 More precious is to God than all their prayers—  
 He sees the heart.

O Makhfi sorrowing,  
 Look from the valley of despair and pain,  
 The breath of love like morning zephyr blows,  
 Pearls from thine cylids fall like gentle rain  
 Upon the garden, summoning the rose,  
 Calling the spring

*O Give Me, Friends, Your Care*

## II

O Give me, friends, your care,  
 Lest in my madness loudly I proclaim  
 The secrets of the Lord, that all may know  
 Like wax I melt within Love's eager flame.  
 But in my breast a heart of stone I bear  
 Mocking its glow

Down unto death I went,  
 The Heavens upon me showered their cruel blows,  
 Pity me, O ye Chosen Ones of God !  
 O Enemy, when shall I gain repose,  
 How long shall I groan under chastisement,  
 Wince 'neath the rod?

How darkened is my fame !  
 Extravagantly have I spent my store,  
 And empty-handed in the market stand ;  
 A dervish am I, and can give no more,  
 No emperor, with glory round my name  
 And lavish hand.

Foundered my boat of life ;  
 Vainly upon the ocean of despair  
 I ventured out, seeking the tranquil shore  
 And the Beloved. No farther can I dare—  
 I bow to Fate, I turn me from the strife,  
 I scheme no more.

The time of spring is past,  
 The rose-leaves in the garden drift apart,  
 Among the trees the bulbul sings no more  
 How long, O madness, shalt thou hold my heart ?  
 How long, O exaltation shalt thou last  
 Now spring is o'er ?

How uselessly is spent  
 And cast away the treasure of my life,  
 In bitter separation from my Friend !  
 Surely, O cruel Heavens, might now my strife  
 My grief, my pain, my weary discontent,  
 Attain the end !

O King, O Teacher, see—  
 E'en in the tale of Alexander's fate,  
 Most fortunate of mortals, thou canst read

## ZEB-UN-NISSA

Of Dara, broken and disconsolate ;  
Yea, sorrowful his shadowed history  
Appears indeed

Upon the feasting day  
Friends joyfully in the assembly meet,  
But Makhfi in the lane of sorrow goes  
Slowly and loth, with melancholy feet,  
No rest, no ease, no peace upon the way,  
The faquir knows.

## ZEB-UN-NISSA

Zeb-un-nissa, famous daughter of Aurangzeb, who at seven knew the "Koran" by heart, claims a strong local interest because she lies at rest at Nawakot in the Lahore environs

In this selection, from time to time, we have had occasion to meet the poetry of the English mystics, notably George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Traherne and Blake, Europe is rich in the poetry of the mystics—that state of emotional ecstasy communing with the unseen which is stronger than any earthly or romantic love. Our line of Catholic mystics is still continuous—Francis Thompson, Coventry Patmore, and Mr Wilfred Childe. But the literature of mysticism is strongest when we think of such names as St Francis, Joachim of Flora, or those delectable women, St Catherine of Siena, St Teresa, Blessed Angela of Foligno, all sprung from the soil of that India of the West—Italy

Zeb-un-nissa, one recent writer eloquently proclaims, "is a flower from the root of Persian ecstasy"

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## ZEB-UN-NISSA

I am burnt as a moth in the flame  
I am as one drunken  
They say, what say they?  
Let them say what they will

The English Catholic seventeenth century mystic, Carshaw, is strongest to parallel this attitude of complete absorption of the emotional ego into the being of another greater and diviner vehicle

Let this immortal life, where'er it comes,  
Walk in a crowd of loves and martyrdoms  
Let mystic deaths wait on 't, and wise souls be  
The love-slain witnesses of this life of thee

Or again, Zeb-un-nissa.

. . . beside Thy feet, a  
beaten hound,  
crouch and fawn for crumbs of love from Thee

O Makhfi, if thy sighs could reach the bosom of the sea,  
Even within the cold and lightless deep  
Caught from thy heart a quenchless flame should leap \*

But how universal is this mystic Muse, for cannot that St Francis of the Mahratta country, Tuka Ram, sing thus

I know no way by which  
My faith thy feet may reach  
Nor e'er depart,  
How, how can I attain  
That thou, O Lord, shalt reign  
Within my heart

---

\**Discern of Zeb-un-nissa*. (Wisdom of the Fast Series)



## ZEB-UN NISSA

The goal is always the same—the exquisite discipline of love, the contemplative discipline of the mystics. Many of the Oriental mystics, for all their tendency to luxuriate in religious eroticism, knew love's long, unremitting discipline, her stern demand of spiritual poverty, chastity and obedience, as we, who boast of having purged ourselves of their crass anthropomorphism, do not. Thus the Indian poet, Princess Zeb-un-nissa sings,

O Love, where dost Thou lead,  
Upon what travel fares our caravan?  
By Hedjaz desert shall thy footsteps speed,  
The longest journey since the world began

And again, more explicitly

Treading Love's path so long,  
Under such heavy burdens did I bow,  
At last my chastened heart has grown so strong  
No task, no pain, can bend my spirit now

That love is not only an inspiration but also a discipline holds nowhere more true than in the soul's communion with God, and the fundamental reason why we know God so little is that we are too volatile and impressionist "to submit to the long, searching process of *practising* the presence of God. To attend to God is a lost art"

This idea of absorption in the greater vehicle Herman finds a peculiarly Asiatic product and sounds a warning of the danger of interpreting such—as it is by some—as "the destruction of personality and therefore of all true ethics". In some of her moods Zeb-un-nissa is illustrative of this absorption using the familiar symbol of the moth lured to annihilation by the flame

How strong thou hast become, O moth, how great,  
Worshipping thus the flame! thus is thy fate—  
Vainly to love and die, yet thou canst bear  
The burning sparks and ever scorn despair

---

\* *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, E. Herman

## ZEB-UN-NISSA

In other moods even this is not enough True love as understood by the mystics must seek no preferment, no reward They would have gladly sung with their Eastern sister, Zeb-un-nissa -

Like Yakub, blinded by his agony,  
No face in all the world is aught to me -  
*What use have eyes, except to look on Thee?*

. . . Zeb-un-nissa exhorts the spiritually minded to a disinterestedness which is at once a longing for adventure and a great surrender of will -

If perilous Love doth thee lead  
If thou enter his track,  
In the desert, like Majnun, thou dwell'st  
evermore,  
Thou shalt never look back,  
Nor even take heed  
To thy life, thou lose it or keep it, and pain  
Shalt disdain,  
Nor seek on the limitless ocean of love for a shore.\*

And so this girl, in whom flowed the blood of Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane, has her place among the world's accepted mystics Of her book it may be said, as earlier Jallaluddin Rumi had said of his "This book contains strange and rare stories, lovely sayings and profound indications, a way for the holy, a garden for the pious It holds the roots of the Faith and truth of the mysteries of certain knowledge."† Such experience as comes to the mystics, and as the Sufis especially believed, sets the soul above good and evil, that the soul is caught up into the Divine just as the precious dew is caught up and becomes one with the divine rays of the sun, with Jami they must say

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## ZEB-UN-NISSA

Do Thou my separate and derived self  
Make one with Thine Essential!

Leave me room  
On that Divan which leaves no room for Twain

This is what separates Sufism from Vedanta in the former the divine part is essential to the whole, but in Vedanta "man has but to open the eyes of his soul to know that he was, is, and shall be Divinity itself"

\* \* \* \*

Of Zeb-un-nissa's personal life, legend and story have been prolific. That she was accomplished far beyond the galaxy of intellect around her is certain, and she excelled in the quick repartee demanded by that most popular of Eastern entertainments—the *mushaira*, where poet rivals poet in open and fascinating session.

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POEMS AND LYRICS  
DRYDEN TO WORDSWORTH

POEMS AND LYRICS  
DRYDEN TO WORDSWORTH

*Two Portraits*

*Achitophel*

Of these the false Achitophel was first,  
 A name to all succeeding ages cursed  
 For close designs, and crooked counsel fit;  
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,  
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place;  
 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:  
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
 Fretted the pigmy-body to decay  
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay  
 A daring pilot in extremity,  
 Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high  
 He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,  
 Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.  
 Great wits are sure to madness near allied,  
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide,  
 Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,  
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?  
 Punish a body which he could not please;  
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?  
 And all to leave what with his toil he won,  
 To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son.  
 Got, while his soul did huddled notions try,  
 And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy,  
 In friendship false, implacable in hate,  
 Resolved to ruin or to rule the state.



To compass this the triple bond he broke ;  
 The pillars of the public safety shook,  
 And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke :  
 Then seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,  
 Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.  
 So easy still it proves, in factious times,  
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes,  
 How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,  
 Where none can sin against the people's will,  
 Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,  
 Since in another's guilt they find their own ?  
 Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge ;  
 The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge  
 In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin  
 With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean.  
 Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress ;  
 Swift of dispatch, and easy of access  
 Oh ! had he been content to serve the crown,  
 With virtues only proper to the gown ,  
 Or had the rankness of the soil been freed  
 From cockle, that oppressed the noble seed ;  
 David for him his tuneful harp had strung,  
 And heaven had wanted one immortal song

*Zimri*

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land ;  
 In the first rank of these did Zimri stand ;  
 A man so various, that he seemed to be

Not one, but all mankind's epitome ;  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong .  
 Was every thing by starts, and nothing long ;  
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon ;  
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,  
 Besides ten thousand freaks that dies in thinking  
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ,  
 With something new to wish, or to enjoy !  
 Railing and praising were his usual themes ,  
 And both, to show his judgement, in extremes ;  
 So over violent, or over civil,  
 That every man with him was God or Devil  
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art  
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.  
 Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,  
 He had his jest, and they had his estate  
 He laughed himself from court , then sought relief  
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief .  
 For, spite of him, the weight of business fell  
 On Absalom, and wise Achitophel .  
 Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,  
 He left no faction, but of that was left

*A Song for St Cecilia's Day*

From Harmony, from heav'nly Harmony  
 This universal Frame began ;  
 When Nature underneath a heap  
 Of jarring Atomes lay,

And cou'd not leave her head,  
 The tuneful Voice was heard from high,  
 Arise, ye more than dead.  
 Then cold and hot and moist and dry  
 In order to their Stations leap,  
 And MUSICK's pow'r obey.  
 From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony  
 This universal Frame began:  
 From Harmony to Harmony  
 Through all the Compass of the Notes it ran,  
 The Diapason closing full in Man.

II

What Passion cannot MUSICK raise and quell?  
 When Tubal struck the corded Shell,  
 His listening Brethren stood around,  
 And, wond'ring, on their Faces fell  
 To worship that Celestial Sound.  
 Less than a God they thought there could not dwell  
 Within the hollow of that Shell,  
 That spoke so sweetly, and so well.  
 What Passion cannot MUSICK raise and quell?

III

The TRUMPETS loud Clangor  
 Excites us to Arms  
 With shrill Notes of Anger  
 And mortal Alarms.

The double double double beat  
 Of the thund'ring DRUM  
 Cryes, Hearn the Foes come;  
 Charge, Charge 'tis too late to retreat

IV

The soft complaining FLUTE  
 In dying Notes discovers  
 The Woes of hopeless Lovers,  
 Whose Dirge is whisper'd by the warbling LUTE

V

Sharp VIOLINS proclaim  
 Their jealous Pangs and Desperation.  
 Fury, frantick Indignation,  
 Depth of Pains and Height of Passion,  
 For the fair, disdainful Dame

VI

But oh! what Art can teach  
 What human Voice can reach  
 The sacred ORGANS Praise?  
 Notes inspiring holy Love,  
 Notes that wing their heavenly Ways  
 To mend the Choirs above

DRYDEN

VII

*Orpheus* cou'd lead the savage race,  
And Trees unrooted left their Place,  
    Sequacious of the Lyre;  
But bright *CECILIA* rais'd the Wonder highe'r:  
When to her Organ vocal Breath was given,  
An Angel heard, and straight appear'd  
    Mistaking Earth for Heav'n.

*Grand Chorus*

As from the Pow'r of Sacred Lays  
    The Spheres began to move,  
And sung the great Creator's Praise  
    To all the bless'd above,  
So, when the last and dreadful Hour  
This crumbling Pageant shall devour,  
The TRUMPET shall be heard on high,  
The dead shall live, the living die,  
And MUSICK shall untune the Sky

DRYDEN

In Dryden we have summed up all the best qualities that we had already found in our group of seventeenth century poets and who excels them in nearly every respect. Dryden's versatility was extraordinary and we find him trying his hand at nearly every kind of composition that the vogue of his time had popularly established. We have seen how many of these poets form connecting links between the new world and the Renaissance. We have with Dryden arrived in modern times. And just as today, Mr Yeats and his *faeries of the Celtic Twilight* are once more

submerged in the mists of old Ireland, so the age of Dryden had come to find less and less use for the fairyfolk, for the Royal Society has placed Puck and Mab and Greymalkin all back in the closets of oblivion. There is however some compunction in the heart of Mr Dryden, the poet, when he tells us

In vain the dairy now with munt is drest,  
The dairy-maid expects no fairy guest,  
To skim the bowls, and after pay the feast

Dryden, the satirist, is brought vividly before us in his poem *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681-1682). "In this biblical disguise Dryden stages contemporary happenings and characters very felicitously. He excelled in the art of portrait painting, his characters of Achitophel and Zimri (The Earl of Shaftesbury and the Duke of Buckingham) are masterpieces of satire, unfair certainly, but terse and incisive." Our extracts illustrate these two "characters" and the compact incisive use of the couplet in the service of satire should be closely watched, for in this kind, what we have before us are masterpieces.

Our other illustration is his famous poem 'A Song for St Cecilia's Day' the patroness of musicians which shows Dryden at his finest in the lyric manner.

*Wonder*

How like an angel came I down !  
How bright are all things here !  
When first among His works I did appear,  
Oh, how their glory did me crown !  
The world resembled His eternity,  
In which my soul did walk ;  
And ev'rything that I did see  
Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence,  
The lovely lively air,  
Oh, how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair !  
The stars did entertain my sense,  
And all the works of God so bright and pure,  
So rich and great, did seem,  
As if they ever must endure  
In my esteem.

A native health and innocence  
Within my bones did grow,  
And while my God did all his glories show,  
I felt a vigor in my sense  
That was all spirit ; I within did flow  
With seas of life-like wine ;  
I nothing in the world did know,  
But 'twas divine

Harsh rugged objects were concealed ;  
 Oppression, tears, and cries,  
 Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes,  
 Were hid, and only things revealed  
 Which heavenly spirits and the angels prize :  
 The state of innocence  
 And bliss, not trades and poverties,  
 Did fill my sense

The streets seemed paved with golden stones,  
 The boys and girls all mine—  
 To me how did their lovely faces shine !  
 The sons of men all holy ones,  
 In joy and beauty then appeared to me ,  
 And ev'rything I found,  
 While like an angel I did see,  
 Adorned the ground

Rich diamonds, and pearl, and gold  
 Might ev'rywhere be seen ;  
 Rare colors, blue, red, white, and green,  
 Mine eyes on ev'ry side behold ;  
 All that I saw a wonder did appear.  
 Amazement was my bliss,  
 That and my wealth met ev'rywhere ;  
 No joy to this !

Cursed, ill-devised proprieties,  
 With envy, avarice,



THOMAS TRAFERNE

And fraud, those friends that spoil ev'n paradise,  
Were not the object of mine eyes;  
Nor hedges, ditches, limits, narrow bounds,  
I dreamt not aught of those.  
But in surveying all men's grounds  
I found repose.

For property itself was mine,  
And hedges, ornaments,  
Walls, houses, coffers, and their rich contents,  
To make me rich combine.  
Clothes, costly jewels, laces, I esteemed  
My wealth, by others worn.  
For me they all to wear them seemed,  
When I was born.

THOMAS TRAFERNE

things of experience in language whose directness and simplicity goes without question, achieving a realism in verbal texture alien to most of the poets of this group who cling undeviatingly to the magic of image and sound as the legitimate birthright of poetry

Traherne opens *Dumness* in this manner

Sure Man was born to meditate on things,  
And to contemplate the eternal springs  
Of God and Nature

This anticipation of Wordsworth is again ahared in *W'onder* -

The world resembled His eternity,  
In which my soul did walk,  
And ev'rything that I did see  
Did with me talk

Traherne reveals a fondness for rich and splendid colour-pictures, keener and more sensuous in its response to the riches hedged about us than any other member of this group excepting Crashaw

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This enthusiasm and delight in the lapidary's craft is a feature even more decided in his prose. In the brief prose extract that follows readers might almost imagine this was a prose preparation for portions of *W'onder*. The same idea is worked out and it is interesting to follow it but for a moment as recording an artist at work in two mediums;

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and the stones of the street were as precious as gold. the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I

THOMAS TRAHERNE

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THOMAS TRAHERNE

It is only recently that Traherne has been placed securely within the niche of fame. Before 1903 his poems were unknown and were first ascribed to George Herbert. To the well known group of metaphysical poets we must now add Traherne whose interest for us in the literature of religious mysticism is considerable. One of his authorities writes of him thus: "In his adoration of childhood, his mystical revelations of Nature and the human body, and his conception of life as a variation played upon the single theme of joy and acceptance, Traherne is allied both to Whitman and to Blake. With Traherne, poetry and religion were positives—their purpose, to testify to the spirit of life!"

To those illustrious names we might well add Wordsworth, for we find in Traherne a good deal of similar passionate desire to express the simple

## THOMAS TRAHERNE

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ROBERT HEATH

To guard her as she walks along ;  
There the flexive turnsole bends  
Guided by the rays she sends  
From her bright eyes, as if thence  
It sucked life by influence ;  
Whilest she, the prime and chiefest flower  
In all the garden, by her power  
And only life-inspiring breath,  
Like the warm sun, redeems from death  
Their drooping heads, and bids them live,  
To tell us she their sweets did give

(*Clarastella*, 1650)

ROBERT HEATH

Here is an example of sustained amatory conceit to a lady. The excuse for the muse always possessed these high sounding but musical proper names, current from the days of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*. Here is a piece of courtly gallantry with the theme—by no means new—of how a garden's loveliness was affected by his mistress' passing, she, "the prime and chiefest flower in all the garden."

*Grub Street*

Then, poet, if you mean to thrive,  
Employ your muse on kings alive;  
With prudence gathering up a cluster  
Of all the virtues you can muster,  
Which, form'd into a garland sweet,  
Lay humbly at your monarch's feet  
Who, as the odours reach his throne,  
Will smile and think them all his own,  
For law and gospel both determine  
All virtues lodge in royal ermine.  
I mean the oracles of both,  
Who shall depose it upon oath.  
Your garland, in the following reign,  
Change but the names will do again  
But, if you think this trade too base,  
(Which seldom is the dunce's case)  
Put on the critic's brow, and sit  
At Will's,\* the puny judge of wit.  
A nod, a shrug, a scornful smile,  
With caution used, may serve a while  
Proceed no futher in your part  
Before you learn the terms of art,  
For you can never be too far gone  
In all our modern critics' jargon:  
Then talk with more authentic face  
Of unities in time and place:  
Get scraps of Horace from your friends.

---

\* A famous coffee house and rendezvous of the wits

And have them at your fingers' ends ;  
 Learn Aristotle's rules by rote,  
 And at all hazards boldly quote ,  
 Judicious Rymer oft review,  
 Wise Dennis, and profound Bossu ,  
 Read all the prefaces of Dryden,  
 For these our critics much confide in ;  
 Though merely writ at first for a shilling  
 A forward critic often dupes us  
 With sham quotations *pert hupsous*\*,  
 And, if we have not read Longinus,  
 Will magisterially outshine us  
 Then, lest with Greek he overrun ye,  
 Procure the book for love or money,  
 Translated from Boileau's translation,  
 And quote quotation on quotation.

At Will's you hear a poem read,  
 Where Battus from the table head,  
 Reclining on his elbow-chair,  
 Gives judgment with decisive air ;  
 To whom the tribe of circling wits  
 As to an oracle submits  
 He gives directions to the town,  
 To cry it up or run it down ,  
 Like courtiers, when they send a note,  
 Instructing members how to vote  
 He sets the stamp of bad and good,

\* A Greek phrase, meaning supported by the best authorities

Though not a word be understood.  
 Your lesson learn'd, you'll be secure  
 To get the name of connoisseur :  
 And, when your merits once are known  
 Procure disciples of your own.  
 For poets (you can never want them),  
 Spread through Augusta Trinobantum\*,  
 Computing by their pecks of coals,  
 Amount to just nine thousand souls ;  
 These o'er their proper districts govern,  
 Of wit and humour judges sovereign  
 In every street a city bard  
 Rules, like an alderman, his ward ;  
 His undisputed rights extend  
 Through all the lane, from end to end ;  
 The neighbours round admire his shrewdness  
 For songs of loyalty and lewdness ;  
 Outdone by none in rhyming well.  
 Although he never learn'd to spell.

Two bordering wits contend for glory ;  
 And one is Whig, and one is Tory ;  
 And this for epics claims the bays,  
 And that, for elegiac lays .  
 Some famed for numbers soft and smooth,  
 By lovers spoke in Punch's booth ;  
 And some as justly fame extols  
 For lofty lines in Smithfield drolls.

---

\* A name chosen for comic effect



\* Bavius in Wapping gains renown,  
And † Maevius reigns o'er Kentish town :  
‡ Tigellius, placed in Phoebus' car,  
From Ludgate shines to Temple Bar  
Harmonious Cibber entertains  
The court with annual birthday strains,  
Whence Gay was banished in disgrace ;  
Where Pope will never show his face ;  
Where Young must torture his invention  
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension.

But these are not a thousandth part  
Of jobbers in the poet's art,  
Attending each his proper station,  
And all in due subordination,  
Through every alley to be found,  
In garrets high, or under ground ,  
And when they join their pericranies,  
Out skips a book of miscellanies.  
Hobbes clearly proves that every creature  
Lives in state of war by nature ;  
The greater for the smaller watch,  
But meddle seldom with their match  
A whale of moderate size will draw  
A shoal of herrings down his maw ;  
A fox with geese his belly crams ;  
A wolf destroys a thousand lambs.

---

\* † Bavius and Maevius stigmatized together as poetasters by Virgil  
Maevius is also contemptuously treated by Horace

‡ A notorious detractor of Horace

But, search among the rhyming race,  
 The brave are worried by the base.  
 If on Parnassus' top you sit,  
 You rarely bite, are always bit :  
 Each poet of inferior size  
 On you shall rail and criticize,  
 And strive to tear you limb from limb ;  
 While others do as much for him.

The vermin only tease and pinch  
 Their foes superior by an inch  
 So, naturalists observe, a flea  
 Has smaller fleas that on him prey ;  
 And these have smaller still to bite 'em,  
 And so proceed *ad infinitum*.  
 Thus every poet, in this kind,  
 Is bit by him that comes behind.  
 Who, though too little to be seen,  
 Can tease, and gall, and give the spleen ;  
 Call dunces, fools, and sons of whores,  
 Lay Grub street at each other's doors ;  
 Extol the Greek and Roman masters,  
 And curse our modern poetasters ;  
 Complain, as many an ancient bard did,  
 How genius is no more rewarded ;  
 How wrong a taste prevails among us ;  
 How much our ancestors outsung us ;  
 Can personate an awkward scorn  
 For those who are not poets born ;  
 And all their brother dunces lash,

## JONATHAN SWIFT

Who crowd the press with hourly trash  
*O Grub street I how do I bemoan thee,*  
 Whose graceless children scorn to own thee!

## JONATHAN SWIFT

*Swift of course has his place in the Pantheon of English writers for his genius as a prose-writer. Knowledge of him and his work in poetry is far less. His early attempts in verse were in the manner of Cowley's Odes, but he soon found, and became convinced, that he possessed no real lyric gift. His true instrument is really the octo-syllabic couplet, a favourite measure for the poetry of satire from mediæval times. We have given one specimen of Swift's use of this couplet, illustrating, with very great verve and spirit, life as lived by the literary hack in the London of his time, for Grub Street is the symbolical abode of this personage, and Goldsmith and others were obliged to starve and struggle at the beck of unprincipled publishers for many a tedious day. It is an animated picture, one as clear and topical as any engraving of Hogarth, the age's greatest satirical painter.*

Some of the great literary celebrities of the day are brought before us

Harmonious Cibber entertains  
 The court with annual birthday strains  
 Whence Gay was banished in disgrace;  
 Where Pope will never show his face;  
 Where Young must torture his invention  
 To flatter knaves, or lose his pension

The jealousies of literary men has been closely observed by Swift; he gives us an eternal judgement of the species, in the lines beginning,

If on Parnassus' top you sit,  
 You rarely bite, are always bit  
 Each poet of inferior size  
 On you shall rail and criticize

"Lacking the genial humour of a Chaucer, Swift yet succeeds in bringing before our eyes a vivid satiric picture of his age"

*The Choice*

## I

If Heav'n the grateful Liberty wou'd give,  
That I might chuse my Method how to live.  
And all those Hours propitious Fate shou'd lend,  
In blissful Ease and Satisfaction spend

## II

Near some fair Town I'd have a private Seat,  
Built uniform, not little nor too great.  
Better, if on a rising Ground it stood,  
Fields on this side, on that a Neighb'ring Wood  
It shou'd within no other Things contain,  
But what are Useful, Necessary, Plain.  
Methinks, 'tis Nauseous, and I'd never endure  
The needless Pomp of gawdy Furniture  
A little Garden, grateful to the Eye,  
And a cool Rivulet run Murmuring by.  
On whose delicious Banks a stately Row  
Of shady Lymes, or Sycamores, shou'd grow  
At th' end of which a silent Study plac'd,  
Shou'd with the noblest Authors there be grac'd  
Horace and Virgil, in whose mighty Lines,  
Immortal Wit, and solid Learning Shines  
Sharp Juvenal, and am'rous Ovid too,  
Who all the turns of Loves soft Passion knew.  
He, that with Judgement, reads his charming Lines,

In which strong Art, with stronger Nature joyns,  
 Must grant, his Fancy do's the best Excel :  
 His Thoughts so tender, and exprest so well ;  
 With all those Moderns, Men of steady Sense,  
 Esteem'd for Learning, and for Eloquence :  
 In some of These, as Fancy shou'd advise,  
 I'd always take my Morning Exercise.  
 For sure, no Minutes bring us more Content,  
 Than those in pleasing useful Studies spent

## III

I'd have a Clear and Competent Estate,  
 That I might live Genteely, but not Great  
 As much as I could moderately spend,  
 A little more sometimes t' oblige a Friend  
 Nor shou'd the Sons of Poverty Repine  
 Too much at Fortune, they shou'd taste of Mine ;  
 And all that Objects of true Pity were,  
 Shou'd be reliev'd with what my Wants cou'd spare .  
 For what our Maker has too largely giv'n,  
 Shou'd be return'd in gratitude to Heav'n  
 A frugal Plenty shou'd my Table spread,  
 With healthful, not luxurious Dishes, led .  
 Enough to satisfy, and something more  
 To feed the Stranger, and the Neighb'ring Poor.  
 Strong Meat indulges Vice, and pampering Food  
 Creates Diseases, and inflames the blood.  
 But what's sufficient to make Nature Strong,

And the bright Lamp of Life continue long,  
 I'd freely take, and as I did possess  
 The bounteous Author of my Plenty bless.

## IV

I'd have a little Cellar, Cool, and Neat,  
 With Humming Ale, and Virgin Wine Repleat.  
 Wine whets the Wit, improves its Native Force,  
 And gives a pleasant Flavour to Discourse ;  
 By making all our Spirits Debonair,  
 Throws off the Lees, the Sedement of Care.  
 But as the greatest Blessing Heaven lends  
 May be debauch'd, and serve ignoble Ends ;  
 So, but too oft, the Grapes refreshing Juice,  
 Does many mischievous Effects produce,  
 My House, shou'd no such rude Disorders know,  
 As from high Drinking consequently flow.  
 Nor wou'd I use what was so kindly giv'n,  
 To the dishonour of Indulgent Heav'n  
 If any Neighbour came he shou'd be free,  
 Us'd with respect, and not Uneasy be,  
 In my Retreat, or to himself, or me.  
 What Freedom, Prudence, and Right Reason give,  
 All men may with Impunity receive :  
 But the least swerving from their Rules too much ;  
 For what's forbidden Us, 'tis Death to touch  
 That Life might be more comfortable yet,  
 And all my Joys refin'd, sincere and great.

## JOHN POMFRET

I'd chuse two Friends, whose Company wou'd be  
 A great Advance to my Felicity.  
 Well born, of Humours suited to my own;  
 Discreet, and Men as well as Books have known  
 Brave, Gen'rous, Witty, and exactly free  
 From loose Behaviour, or Formality  
 Airy, and Prudent, Merry, but not Light,  
 Quick in discerning; and in Judging Right;  
 Secret they shou'd be, faithful to their Trust,  
 In Reasoning Cool, Strong, Temperate and Just  
 Obliging, Open, without huffing, Brave,  
 Brisk in gay Talking, and in sober Grave  
 Close in Dispute, but not tenacious, try'd  
 By solid Reason, and let that decide;  
 Not prone to Lust, Revenge, or envious Hate;  
 Nor busy Meddlers with Intrigues of State.  
 Strangers to Slander, and aworn Foes to Spight  
 Not quarrelsome, but Stout enough to Fight;  
 Loyal and Pious, Friends to Caesar true,  
 As dying Martyrs to their Maker too.  
 In their Society I cou'd not miss  
 A permanent, sincere, substantial Bliss

## JOHN POMFRET

Pomfret's *Choice* was first published in 1699 and was considered one of the best poems of its day and remained very popular throughout the eighteenth century. We see here the interest of the educated man of leisure of the time in his domestic and household comforts. It is a far cry back to Bacon's essay *On Gardens* where first we saw the taste and interest

in the surroundings of his house displayed by the Elizabethan gentleman. That interest has never been lost. One of the men most interested after Bacon in gardens was John Evelyn, in the reign of Charles II. Here now again we see such a subject has become important enough to be considered appropriate to the Muse. John Pomfret does not conceal from us his interests and taste in the matter of a country house, and, after all, what goes more to make a living in a country delightful. He says that he prefers his house raised on a slight eminence with fields on one side and the wood on the other. Above all he would like a little garden grateful to the eye, and one of the essentials is a little stream running through. From this it may be seen the taste of the West is not always very different from that of the East, since running water and its charm, was one of the essentials too of the Persian garden. We see that the poem continues all the taste that must satisfy the cultured man of the time. His creature comfort must receive due attention when he says

I'd have a little Cellar, Cool, and Neat,  
 With Humming Ale, and Virgin Wine Repleat  
 Wine whets the Wit, improves its Native Force,  
 And gives a pleasant Flavour to Discourse,  
 By making all our Spirits Debonair,  
 Throws off the Lees, the Sediment of Care

He is no loose drinker, but an epicure. no slave to these creature comforts, but using them carefully, to the mind and body's good, as when he says

My House, shou'd no such rude Disorders know,  
 As from high Drinking consequently flow  
 Now wou'd I use what was so kindly giv'n,  
 To the dishonour of Indulgent Heav'n.

Perhaps there are few poems so little known as this before us, or which so excellently shows the prevailing temper of the eighteenth century, namely, *urbanity* and *wit*. Dr Johnson thought highly of it. "Perhaps no composition in one language has been oftener perused than Pomfret's *Choice*."



(FROM *Essay on Man*)*The Quality of True Virtue*

Know then this truth, enough for man to know,—  
'Virtue alone is happiness below'  
The only point where human bliss stands still,  
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;  
Where only merit constant pay receives,  
Is bless'd in what it takes and what it gives;  
The joy unequall'd if its end it gain,  
And if it lose, attended with no pain:  
Without satiety, though e'er so blessed,  
And but more relish'd as the more distress'd  
The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,  
Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears  
God from each object, from each place acquired,  
For ever exercised, yet never tired;  
Never enraged while one man's oppress'd,  
Never dejected, while another's bless'd,  
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,  
Since but to wish more virtue is to gain  
See the sole bliss Heaven could on all bestow!  
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:  
Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,  
The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find,  
Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,  
But looks through nature upto nature's God,  
Pursues that chain which links the immense design,

Joins Heaven and earth, and mortal and divine;  
 Sees, that no being any bliss can know,  
 But touches some above, and some below ;  
 Learns from this union of the rising whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul ;  
 And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,  
 All end in love of God, and love of man.  
 For him alone hope leads from goal to goal,  
 And opens still, and opens on his soul ;  
 Till lengthen'd on to faith, unconfined,  
 It pours the bliss that fill up all the mind  
 He sees, why nature plants in man alone  
 Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown ;  
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
 Are given in vain, but what they seek they find)  
 Wise is her present, she connects in this  
 His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss ;  
 At once his own bright prospect to be bless'd  
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.  
 Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,  
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine  
 Is this too little for the boundless heart ?  
 Extend it, let thy enemies have part .  
 Grasp the whole world of reason, life, and sense,  
 In one close system of benevolence .  
 Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,  
 And height of bliss but height of charity.

God loves from whole to parts ; But human soul  
 Must rise from individual to the whole

# ALEXANDER POPE

Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,  
 And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,  
 That crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,  
 Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.  
 Let India boast her plants, nor envy we  
 The weeping amber or the balmy tree,  
 While by our Oaks the precious loads are born,  
 And realms commanded which those trees adorn.  
 Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,  
 Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,  
 Than what more humble mountains offer here,  
 Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.  
 See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pamaona Crown'd,  
 Here blushing Flora paints th' enamel'd ground,  
 Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,  
 And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand  
 Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,  
 And Peace and Plenty tell, a Stuart reigns.

(*Windsor Forest*, 1713)

# ALEXANDER POPE

With Alexander Pope we come to one of the greatest figures of the eighteenth century. He is the great link with Dryden. Pope delighted to remember that he had seen that great man as a little boy. Dryden died on the 1st of May 1700, at which time Pope could not have been twelve years of age. Pope was too delicate for a public school education, and in his thirteenth year his education became one of self-instruction. His early influences were the classics. *Windsor Forest* is his greatest contribution to the *Pastorals*, and is undoubtedly influenced by Denham's *Cooper's Hill*. This

## ALEXANDER POPE

poem appeared in 1713 ; it abounds in admirably exact and elegant description of the Forest and its life, which Pope knew well. But how far a cry is this sort of thing from the poetry of Wordsworth -

Where order in variety we see,  
And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.  
Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,  
And part admit, and part exclude the day  
And some coy nymph her lover's warm address

In the *Essay on Man* we see Pope venturing bravely into the world of philosophy, but his philosophy is not original and is mostly taken from the vogue of the period and echoes a good deal the convictions of his friend Bolingbroke. "The fault of the essay chiefly is that it does not obey sufficiently logical progression of connected thought, but the triumph of the poem is that never before have so many generalizations been expressed with such epigrammatic force"\*. How memorable can be such lines as these

Self-love but served the virtues mund to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake

Teach me, like thee in various nature wise,  
To fall with dignity, with temper rise,  
Form'd by the converse, happily to steer  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe,  
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please.

That Virtue only makes our bliss below ;  
And all our knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW

Pope is the great apostle of this classic form. Nowhere is this seen to greater advantage than in Pope's *Iliad*. Here he chooses for his translation of Homer the Heroic Couplet, the ideal verse medium of the classic school

---

\* A Short History of English Literature Legouis

And shine more strongly through a mine of lead  
 With such low arts your hearers never bilk,  
 For who can bear a fustian lined with silk?  
 Sooner than preach such stuff, I'd walk the town,  
 Without my scarf, in Whiston's draggled gown;  
 Ply at the Chapter, and at Child's to read  
 For pence, and bury for a groat a head

Some easy subject choose, within your power,  
 Or you will ne'er hold out for half an hour  
 Still to your hearers all your sermons sort:  
 Who'd preach against corruption at a court?  
 Against church power at visitations bawl?  
 Or talk about damnation at Whitehall?  
 Harangue the Horse Guards on a cure of souls?  
 Condemn the quirks of Chancery at the Rolls?  
 Or rail at hoods and organs at St. Paul's?  
 Or, be, like David Jones, so indiscreet,  
 To rave at usurers in Lombard Street?

Begin with care, nor, like that curate vile,  
 Set out in this high prancing stumbling style:  
 "Whoever with a piercing eye can see  
 Through the past records of futurity?"  
 All gape, no meaning;—the puffed orator  
 Talks much, and says just nothing for an hour  
 Truth and the text he labours to display,  
 Till both are quite interpreted away;  
 So frugal dames insipid water pour,  
 Till green, bohea, or coffee, are no more.  
 His arguments in giddy circles run

Still round and round, and end where they begun :  
 So the poor turnspit, as the wheel runs round  
 The more he gains, the more he loses ground  
 No parts distinct or general scheme we find  
 But one wild shapeless monster of the mind ·  
 So when old Bruin teems, her children fail  
 Of limbs, form, figure, features, head, or tail ;  
 Nay, though she licks the ruins, all her cares  
 Scarce mend the lumps, and bring them but to bears.  
 Ye country vicars, when you preach in town  
 A turn at Paul's, to pay your journey down,  
 If you would shun the sneer of every prig,  
 Lay by the little band, and rusty wig ·  
 But yet be sure, your proper language know,  
 Nor talk as born within the sound of Bow.  
 Speak not the phrase that Drury Lane affords,  
 Nor from 'Change Alley steal a cant of words  
 Coachmen will criticize your style, nay further,  
 Porters will bring it in for wilful murther ;  
 The dregs of the canaille will look askew,  
 To hear the language of the town from you ,  
 Nay my lord mayor, with merriment possest,  
 Will, break his nap, and laugh among the rest,  
 And jog the aldermen to hear the jest

## CHRISTOPHER PITT

Christopher Pitt is one of the minor poets, of his period, but important enough to find a place in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. Of him Samuel Johnson reported, "Pitt pleases the critic and Dryden the people; Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read." Since then Pitt has rather sunk into oblivion, but we need not apologize for reviving him here because the poem before us is an unfinished imitation of Horace, where in playful mood he jokes on the art of writing sermons in which he took a professional interest. the art of writing, in which he was interested as a poet of his time. The poem, as may be seen, is full of topical allusions to men, people, custom and manners of the time. There are many memorable lines in the best tradition in English satire, for example, apropos of Priests

Lake oil on water mounts the prelate up,  
His grace is always sure to be at top;  
That vein of mercury its beams will spread  
And shine more strongly through a mine of lead

In the following lines the advice which is given might be extended happily and profitably beyond those whose profession it is to deliver sermons, and might embrace many of those whose business it is to deliver lectures without sufficient forethought

Begin with care, nor, like that curate vile,  
Set out in this high prancing stumbling style.  
.... ..  
All gape, no meaning,—the puffed orator  
Talks much, and says just nothing for an hour  
.. .... .

His arguments in giddy circles run  
Still round and round, and end where they begun.  
So the poor turnspit, as the wheel runs round  
The more he gains, the more he loses ground

## CHRISTOPHER PITT

It is not difficult to discover that Mr Christopher Pitt was not one of those who suffered fools gladly, and well deserves, for this alone, commendation at the hands of the great lexicographer. He was a member of New College, Oxford. I do not know if at present that University has revived his memory; but at any rate here is the record of an attempt, however slight.



*A Winter Scene*

Thro' the hush'd Air the whitening Shower descends,  
At first thin-wavering ; till at last the Flakes,  
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the Day,  
With a continual Flow. The cherish'd Fields  
Put on their Winter-Robe, of purest White.  
'Tis Brightness all ; save where the new Snow melts,  
Along the mazy Current. Low, the Woods  
Bow their hoar Head ; and, ere the languid Sun  
Faint from the West emits his Evening-Ray,  
Earth's universal Face, deep-hid, and chill,  
Is one wild dazzling Waste, that buries deep  
The Works of Man, Drooping, the Labourer-Ox  
Stands cover'd o'er with Snow, and then demands  
The Fruit of all his Toil The Fowls of Heaven,  
Tam'd by the cruel Season, croud around  
The winnowing Store, and claim the little Boon  
Which Providence assigns them One alone,  
The Red-Breast, sacred to the household Gods,  
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling Sky,  
In joyless Fields, and thorny Thickets, leaves  
His shivering Mates, and pays to trusted Man  
His annual Visit. Half-afraid, he first  
Against the Window beats, then, brisk, alights  
On the warm Hearth ; then, hopping o'er the Floor,  
Eyes all the smiling Family askance,  
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is :  
Till more familiar grown, the Table-Crumbs

Attract his slender Feet. The foodless Wilds  
 Pour forth their brown Inhabitants. The Hare,  
 Tho' Timorous of Heart, and hard beset  
 By Death in various Forms, dark Snares, and Dogs,  
 And more un pitying Men, the Garden Seeks,  
 Urg'd on by fearless Want. The bleating Kind  
 Eye the bleak Heaven, and next the glistening Earth  
 With Looks of dumb Despair; then, sad-dispers'd,  
 Dig for the wither'd Herb thro' Heaps of Snow  
 (Winter, 1726)

*The Pleasant Land of Indolence*

In lowly Dale, fast by a River's Slide,  
 With woody Hill O'er Hill encompass'd round,  
 A most enchanting Wizard did abide,  
 Than whom a Fiend more fell is no where found.  
 It was, I ween, a lovely spot of Ground;  
 And there a Season atween June and May,  
 Half pranked with Spring, with Summer half imbrown'd?  
 A listless Climate made, where, Sooth to say,  
 No living Wight could work, ne—cared even for Play.

Was nought around but Images of Rest.  
 Sleep-soothing Groves, and quiet Lawns between;  
 And flowery Beds that slumbrous Influence kest,  
 From Poppies breath'd, and Beds of plasant green,  
 Where never yet was creeping Creature seen  
 Meantime, unnumbered glittering Streamlets play'd,

And hurled every-where their waters sheen ;  
 That, as they bicker'd through the sunny Glade,  
 Though restless still themselves, a lulling Murmur made.

Join'd to the Prattle of the Purling Rills,  
 Were heard the lowing Herds along the Vale,  
 And Flocks loud-bleating from the distant Hills,  
 And vacant Shepherds piping in the Dale ;  
 And now and then sweet *Philomel* would wail,  
 Or Stock-Doves plain amid the Forest deep,  
 That drowsy rustled to the sighing Gale ;  
 And still a Coil the Grasshopper did keep :  
 Yet all these Sounds Yblent inclined all to Sleep.

Full in the Passage of the Vale, above,  
 A sable, silent, solemn Forest stood ;  
 Where nought but shadowy Forms were seen to move,  
 As Idless fancy'd in her dreaming Mood  
 And up the Hills, on either side, a Wood  
 Of blackening Pines, ay waving to and fro,  
 Sent forth a sleepy Horror through the Blood ;  
 And where this Valley winded out, below,  
 The murmuring Main was heard, and scarcely heard  
 to flow.

A pleasing Land of Drowsy-hed it was •  
 Of Dreams that wave before the half-shut Eye ;  
 And of gay Castles in the Clouds that pass,  
 For ever flushing round a Summer-Sky :  
 There eke the soft Delights, that witchingly

## JAMES THOMSON

Instil a wanton Sweetness through the Breast,  
And the calm Pleasures always hover'd nigh ;  
But whate'er smack'd of Noyance, or Unrest,  
Was far far off expell'd from this delicious Nest

## JAMES THOMSON

With James Thomson we come to one of the most important poets of the period after Pope and whose influence on the poetry succeeding him cannot be under-estimated. By Hazlitt he was called the best of our descriptive poets. The poem on which his fame chiefly rests is *The Seasons*. Nature, unlike the treatment accorded by Thomson's predecessors, is not accidental any longer, but becomes an essential part of the poem. The usefulness of Thomson in preparing the way for these descriptions of Nature evoking joy in the beholder has been very much under-valued. Thomson led the way, and a long band of followers succeeded, culminating in the great Wordsworth. It also cannot be gainsaid that Thomson is a minute and accurate observer of his subjects. Dr Johnson has truly said that our poet looks 'with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet—the eye that distinguishes, in everything presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with the mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute.' He succeeds in presenting us with memorable vignettes as that one you have read of the *Robin Red-Breast*.

One alone,  
The Red-Breast, sacred to the household Gods,  
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling Sky,  
In joyless Fields, and thorny Thickets, leaves  
His shivering Mates, and pays to trusted Man  
His annual Visit. Half-afraid, he first

JAMES THOMSON

Against the Window beats, then, brisk, alights  
On the warm Hearth, then, hopping O'er the Floor,  
Eyes all the smiling Family askance,  
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he it  
Till more familiar grown, the Table-Crumbs  
Attract his slender Feet

The remarks of Coleridge with reference to Thomson's attitude to nature are interesting Says Coleridge

" The love of Nature seems to have led Thomson to a cheerful religion, and a gloomy religion to have led Cowper to a love of Nature The one would carry fellow-man along with him into Nature, the other flies to Nature from his fellow-man In chastity of diction, however, and the harmony of blank verse, Cowper leaves Thomson immeasurably below him, yet I still feel the latter to have been the born poet " This is not quite fair perhaps, and is in contradiction to the opinion of a great French critic who held Thomson at his best in painting large canvasses and massing his general effects In *The Castle of Indolence* we have Thomson imitating Spenser in playful mood The stanza—one of the most difficult to handle successfully—is managed with great skill How happily the choice of metre is wedded to the choice of subject-matter may be seen in these lines

A pleasing Land of Drowsy-hed it was  
Of Dreams that wave before the half-shut Eye,  
And of gay Castles in the Clouds that pass,  
For ever flushing round a Summer-Sky

The late Edmund Gosse is of the opinion that *The Castle of Indolence* was responsible in some measure for shaping certain aspects of the work of Shelley Also the other poem *The Seasons* undoubtedly influenced largely the attitude to Nature of a group of romantic poets of Germany

# WILLIAM COLLINS

## *Ode to Evening*

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song  
May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine ear  
Like thy own solemn springs,  
Thy springs, and dying gales ;

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-hair'd sun  
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,  
With brede ethereal wove,  
O'erhang his wavy bed ,

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat  
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,  
Or where the beetle winds  
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,  
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum,—  
Now teach me, maid composed,  
To breathe some soften'd strain

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,  
May not unseemly with its stillness suit ;  
As, musing slow, I hail  
Thy genial loved return

For when thy folding-star arising shows  
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp  
The fragrant Hours, and Elves  
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with  
 sedge  
 And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,  
 The pensive Pleasures sweet,  
 Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene ;  
 Or find some ruin midst its dreary dells,  
 Whose walls more awful nod  
 By thy religious gleams,

Or, if chill blustering winds or driving rain  
 Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut  
 That, from the mountain's side,  
 Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires ;  
 And hears their simple bell ; and marks o'er all  
 Thy dewy fingers draw  
 The gradual dusky veil

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,  
 And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !  
 While Summer loves to sport  
 Beneath thy lingering light ,

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;  
 Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,  
 Affrights thy shrinking train  
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

WILLIAM COLLINS

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,  
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,  
Thy gentlest influence own,  
And love thy favourite name!

WILLIAM COLLINS

"The most exquisite lyric of the century," is Professor Emile Legouis' opinion of Collins' achievement in the *Ode to Evening*. This might seem too facile a tribute and we may well ask how comes it to merit so high a praise. To answer this is to go some way in estimating the genius of Collins.

The *Ode to Evening* achieves its greatness because it is a supreme achievement in that class of literature which has come to be known as 'the poetry of atmosphere'. The construction of this poem is worth detaining us a moment:

From its splendid openings to the close of stanza seven we have a unity of impression by reason of what we may call the sustained invocation to the twilight goddess, the goddess of 'lingering light' the poet calls her. This is really Part I of the *Ode*. Part II changes to a shifting scene, but still subscribing to the unity of the whole through the compelling presence of the goddess of 'lingering light' who is the presiding genius of the near as well as the distant prospect. About this Part II there is a timelessness as in turn we are invited to observe all the seasons—winter, spring, summer, autumn.

The atmosphere that all the critics stress as being so peculiarly satisfying in this poem is obtained through the simplest means—power of word suggestion along with power of matured observation perfectly assimilated and communicated. The prevailing atmosphere is one of calm. This again helps towards producing that charming unity of impression. It is the gift of calm and quietude that the goddess of the 'lingering light' brings as the prize for her votaries, whom—

"Thy gentlest influence own"



Again the poem will repay word-study for those who would come to some understanding of just how a poet creates word-magic. One last and most significant thing which again secures for the poem its organic unity—the cloak cast over it of England's pastoral heritage, cloak rich enough to weave the names of Drayton, Fletcher, Milton, among others, into the diapered fabric of its glory.

Lastly in a final appraisal of Collins let us summon to our aid the enthusiasm and fire of the poet Swinburne who speaks of Collins thus

"Even in his own age it was the fatally foolish and uncritical fashion to couple the name of Collins with that of Gray, as though they were poets of the same order or kind. As an elegiac poet, Gray holds for all ages to come his unassailable and sovereign station; as a lyric poet, he is simply unworthy to sit at the feet of Collins."

Then this to make an end—"In the little book of odes which *dropped*, a still-born immortal, from the press, and was finally burnt up even to the last procurable copy by the hands of its author in a fever-fit of angry despair, there was hardly a single false note, and there were not many less than sweet or strong. There was above all things, a purity of music, a clarity of style, to which I know of no parallel in English verse from the death of Andrew Marvell to the birth of William Blake."

One further point of the greatest interest to those who pursue that fascinating study of the parallels in literature and art! Attention to it again we owe to the probing understanding of Swinburne. He says "Among all English poets he has, it seems to me, the closest affinity to our great contemporary school of French landscape-painters. Corot on canvas might have signed his *Ode to Evening*, Millet might have given us some of his graver studies, and left them as he did no whit the less sweet for their softly austere and simply tender gravity. His magnificent Highland Ode, so villainously defaced after his death by the most impudent interpolations on record, has much in it of Millais, and something also of Courbet."

That is wonderfully suggestive as to how we should come to our literary studies—hand in hand with the beauties of painting

## THOMAS GRAY

### *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds,

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;  
 How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
 How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
 Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
 Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:—  
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault  
 If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
 Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise

Can storied urn or animated bust  
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
 Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
 Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,  
 Or waked to extasy the living lyre:

THOMAS GRAY

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll ;  
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,  
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,  
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood

Th' applause of listening senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad - nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;  
Forbad to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,  
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride  
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife  
 Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;  
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life  
 They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect  
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,  
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,  
 The place of fame and elegy supply;  
 And many a holy text around she strews,  
 That teach the rustic moralist to die

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,  
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
 Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires;  
 E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,  
 E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,  
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;  
 If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
 Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,  
 ' Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
 Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,  
 To meet the sun upon the upland lawn ;

' There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
 That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
 His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,  
 And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

' Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
 Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,  
 Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,  
 Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love

' One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,  
 Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;  
 Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,  
 Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he ;

' The next with dirges due in sad array  
 Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,—  
 Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay  
 Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn '

## THOMAS GRAY

If ever a poet's life became part of his university, and his university a part of him it is in the case of Gray, who spent most of his life under the sheltering havens afforded by two Cambridge colleges—Peterhouse and Pembroke. He was made professor of modern history in 1768 at the close of his life. He never lectured and therefore his accomplishments were reserved for a small and select circle.

In recent times the greatest tribute has come from Matthew Arnold who quotes from Temple a friend of Gray. There is much in it that seems akin to ideal dom-ship.

"Mr Gray was perhaps the most learned man in Europe. He knew every branch of history both natural and civil; he had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy, and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics made a principal part of his study. Voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening."

From that we can safely assume that Mr Gray was not at all badly equipped even for the eighteenth century. But Dr Johnson is prepared to provide a cold douche. "What signifies so much knowledge, when it produced so little." Even on the subject of Mr Gray's odes the Doctor is rather stuffy. Says he: "These odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments," and so on. He is not quite so off the mark when he greets the *Elegy*. Here he rejoices to concur with the common reader.

The Church-yard abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. . . . Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him."

Modern criticism fortified by the literary dictatorship—a benevolent and profound one—of the late Professor Saintsbury affords a more reasoned and careful evaluation, but one again kept carefully in hand. We find Gray's

fondness for poetic diction and personification severely taken to task, for both are hall marks of his age. Wordsworth was to assail them later and bring them into a disrepute from which they had never suffered before. Why, asks Saintsbury, should Gray eke out the matter of his text with such enfeebled clichés as 'rosy-bosomed Hours', the 'tolling hand of Care', and 'Contemplation's Sober eye'? With regard to the *Elegy* he feels that "the expression never quite reaches that poignant suggestiveness, that endless circling of new and ever new music, which distinguishes the greatest poetry." Other critics since have added their quota. Here is one of the more probing: "We are at once conscious of the artificial and ambitious character of the effort, precocious as an essay in literature, but without genuine feeling, without the correspondence between man and nature, which alone can create a mood. And it was the power to create a mood which was the distinctive merit of the best poems of this class and at this date." For the poet Swinburne much of Gray is fanfaronade and falsetto which impair the always rhetorically elaborate."

Nothing however can take away from the fact that the *Elegy* is one of the most memorable contributions to the 'literature of melancholy' of which it may be reasonably said *Il Penseroso* makes the splendid beginning.

Gray and Collins between them are among the immediate pioneers of the Romantic Movement in English poetry



*Advice to a Scholar*

When first the College Rolls receive his Name  
The young Enthusiast quits his Ease for Fame;  
Thro' all his Veins the Fever of Renown  
Burns from the strong Contagion of the Gown;  
Over Bodley's Dome\* his future Labours spread,  
And Bacon's Mansion trembles o'er his Head;  
Are these thy Views? proceed, illustrious Youth,  
And Virtue guard thee to the Throne of Truth.  
Yet should thy Soul indulge the gen'rous Heat  
Till captive Science yields her last Retreat;  
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest Ray,  
And pour on misty Doubt resistless Day,  
Should no false Kindness lure to loose Delight,  
Nor Praise relax, nor Difficulty fright;  
Should tempting Novelty the Cell refrain,  
And Sloth effuse her opiate Fumes in Vain;  
Should Beauty blunt on Fops her fatal Dart,  
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd Heart;  
Should no Disease thy torpid Veins invade,  
Nor Melancholy's Phantoms haunt thy shade;  
Yet hope not Life From Grief or Danger free,  
Nor think the Doom of Man revers'd for thee.  
Deign on the passing World to turn thine Eyes,  
And pause awhile from Letters to be wise;  
There mark what Ills the Scholar's Life assail,  
Toil, Envy, Want, the Patron, and the Jail

---

\*Bodley's Dome—The dome of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

See Nations slowly wise, and meanly just,  
To buried Merit raise the tardy Bust.  
If Dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
Hear Lydiat's\* Life, and Galileo's End

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Samuel Johnson was at Oxford for a short time, but was obliged owing to the financial failure of his father, to leave the university without taking a degree. But his education had been thorough, especially in the classics. Latin seems to have made the most serious impression upon him, particularly the poets Horace and Juvenal. His imitations of Juvenal are among the best imitations of a classic we possess. In *The Vanity of Human Wishes* we have a poem in the typical classic manner. In it he takes a wider sweep of reference than his models, giving us intimate vignettes of nature, society, and manners. The vicissitudes of the profession of letters at this time Johnson knew at first hand just as well as Goldsmith.

And pause awhile from Letters to be wise;  
There mark what Ills the Scholars' Life assail,  
Toil, Envy, Want, the Patron, and the Jail

The late Sir Edmund Gosse has described this poem (*The Vanity Of Human Wishes*) as "perhaps the most Roman poem in the language." Earlier in the nineteenth century Sir Walter Scott found in it a "deep and pathetic morality."

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\* Thomas Lydiat, born in 1572, educated at Winchester School and New College, was cosmographer to Prince Henry, son of James I, and was a great scholar.

*Auburn*

Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain,  
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,  
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,  
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd,  
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,  
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,  
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!  
How often have I paused on every charm,  
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,  
The never failing brook, the busy mill,  
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,  
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,  
For talking age and whispering lovers made!  
How often have I blest the coming day,  
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,  
And all the village train from labour free  
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,  
While many a pastime circled in the shade,  
The young contending as the old surveyed,  
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,  
And slights of art and feats of strength went round,  
And still as each repeated pleasure tired,  
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;  
The dancing pair that simply sought renown  
By holding out to tire each other down;  
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,

While secret laughter tittered round the place,  
 The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,  
 The matron's glance that would those looks reprove !  
 These were thy charms, sweet village ; sports like these,  
 With sweet succession taught even toil to please ;  
 These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,  
 These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled,  
 Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,  
 Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn ;  
 Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,  
 And desolation saddens all the green .  
 One only master grasps the whole domain,  
 And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain ,  
 No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,  
 But choaked with sedges, works its weedy way ,  
 Along thy glades, a solitary guest,  
 The hollow sounding bittorn guards its nest ;  
 Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,  
 And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.  
 Sunk are thy bowers, in shapeless ruin all,  
 And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall ;  
 And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,  
 Far, far away thy children leave the land  
 Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay .  
 Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;  
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made ,  
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
 When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

*The Village Parson*

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
And still where many a garden flower grows wild :  
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose  
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.  
A man he was, to all the country dear,  
And passing rich with forty pounds a year :  
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place :  
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour :  
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize  
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise  
His house was known to all the *vagrant train*,  
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain.  
The long remembered beggar was his guest,  
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast :  
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,  
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed.  
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sate by his fire, and talked the night away.  
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,  
Shouldered his crutch, and shewed how fields were won.  
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,  
And quite forgot their vices in their woe.  
Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,  
His pity gave ere charity began  
Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
And even his failings leaned to Virtue's side :

But in his duty prompt at every call,  
 He watched and wept, he rayed and felt, for all.  
 And as a bird each fond endearment tries,  
 To tempt its new fledged offspring to the skies :  
 He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,  
 Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.  
 Beside the bed where parting life was layed,  
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,  
 The reverend champion stood At his control,  
 Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul :  
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,  
 And his last faltering accents whispered praise.  
 At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
 His looks adorned the venerable place  
 Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,  
 And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.  
 The service past, around the pious man,  
 With steady zeal each honest rustic ran -  
 Even children followed with endearing wile,  
 And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile  
 His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,  
 Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest :  
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.  
 As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm  
 Tho' round its breat the rolling clouds are spread.  
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

( *The Deserted Village*, 1770)

## OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith is another contributor to the poetry of Landscape. In *The Traveller* (1746), we find a record of his impressions on a journey written by him while touring the continent, with agreeable glimpses and peeps at several countries famous for their picturesque scenery. France, Switzerland and Italy are given the prior claims in the author's descriptive gift. Of all his poems perhaps *The Deserted Village* is his most famous. It is an idealization of a village in Ireland endeared to Goldsmith by the fact that it was there that he had passed his childhood. In the various characters that are brought before our eyes we are reminded to some extent of the method of Chaucer. We have the village in its natural beauties brought before us eyes, along with the warmhearted manners of its inhabitants, the eccentricities of the school-master and the model character of the village, and the village parson. Such lines as those beginning

His house was known to all the *vagrant train*,  
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain ,

bring before us an unforgettable muse

*The Deserted Village* is directly inspired by the pastoral tradition of English poetry, and it has been rightly judged as one of the last fine poems written in the heroic couplet of Pope. The attitude to life suggested by this poem is an idyllic one. For the opposite attitude we have to wait for the poetry of George Crabbe who provides us an eloquent but disillusioned answer in his poem *The Village* (1783), in which, of course, the chief appeal is to truth as against romantic fiction.

*The Hare*

They love the country, and none else, who seek  
For their own sake its silence and its shade ;  
Delights which who would leave, that has a heart  
Susceptible of pity, or a mind  
Cultured and capable of sober thought,  
For all the savage din of the swift pack,  
And clamours of the field? Detested sport,  
That owes its pleasures to another's pain,  
That feels upon the sobs and dying shrieks  
Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued  
With eloquence that agonies inspire,  
Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs !  
Vain tears, alas ! and sighs that never find  
A corresponding tone in jovial souls  
Well,—one at least is safe One sheltered hare  
Has never heard the sanguinary yell  
Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.  
Innocent partner of my peaceful home,  
Whom ten long years' experience of my care  
Has made at last familiar, she has lost  
Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,  
Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine.  
Yes,—thou mayst eat thy bread, and lick the hand  
That feeds thee, thou mayst frolic on the floor  
At evening, and at night retire secure  
To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarmed :  
For I have gained thy confidence, have pledged



All that is human in me to protect  
 Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.  
 If I survive thee I will dig thy grave;  
 And when I place thee in it, sighing say,  
 I knew at least one hare that had a friend

*Simple Faith*

Yon cottager who weaves at her own door,  
 Pillow and bobbins all her little store,  
 Content though mean, and cheerful, if not gay,  
 Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,  
 Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night  
 Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light  
 She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,  
 Has little understanding, and no wit,  
 Receives no praise, but (though her lot be such,  
 Toilsome and indigent) she renders much  
 Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,  
 A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;  
 And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,  
 Her title to a treasure in the skies  
 Oh happy peasant ! Oh unhappy bard :  
 His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward ;  
 He prais'd perhaps for ages yet to come,  
 She never heard of half a mile from home ;  
 He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,  
 She safe in the simplicity of her's.

## WILLIAM COWPER

### WILLIAM COWPER

With William Cowper we arrive at a poet whose contributions to what might be called the domestic history of England is unrivalled. He is famous principally as the author of a poem called *The Task*. Here is a poem that brings vividly before us the leisured life of a gentleman of the period. Here are gathered together the writer's boyish love for country rambles, his walks with friends, his opinions on prevailing topics of his time; his individual fondness for animals, his strong affection for his pets, his sympathy with his fellow-men; all are here set down. Along with these we have exquisite painting word miniatures to illustrate the writer's private peace and happiness. In fact before the poem is completed we have a perfect portrait of Cowper the Man. The colloquial freedom and facility of his letters are frequently transferred to his poetry, and a very lovable picture is the sum-total of the result. It may be well said that the prevailing note of his style is an exquisite simplicity. The man whose goodness of heart led him to enthusiastic pleading for the abolition of one of the grimmest abuses of the time namely, the Slave Trade, never seems to allow that goodness to remain absent from his work. How deep this sincerity goes may be seen in his affection for the humblest creatures of the earth.

One sheltered hare  
Has never heard the sanguinary yell  
Of cruel man, exulting in her woes

There is Cowper the idealist. In his attitude to Nature he anticipates the Lake School of poetry. Nature for him is the great healer. Perhaps one of Cowper's most memorable lines is -

God made the country, and man made the town

in which sentiment he is at one with that great beacon to all future romantics of the nineteenth century, namely Rousseau.

*The Minstrel's Song*

Oh sing unto my roundelay ;  
 Oh drop the briny tear with me ,  
 Dance no more on holiday ;  
 Like a running river be !  
     My love is dead,  
     Gone to his death-bed,  
     All under the willow tree !

Black his hair as the winter night,  
 White his throat as the summer snow,  
 Red his cheek as the morning light,  
 Cold he lies in the grave below.  
     My love is dead,  
     Gone to his death-bed,  
     All under the willow tree !

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note ;  
 Quick in dance as thought can be ;  
 Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,  
 Oh, he lies by the willow tree  
     My love is dead,  
     Gone to his death-bed,  
     All under the willow tree !

Hark ! the raven flaps his wing  
 In the biery dell below ;  
 Hark ! the death-owl loud doth sing  
 To the night-mares as they go

My love is dead,  
Gone to his death-bed,  
All under the willow tree !

See ! the white moon shines on high ;  
Whiter is my true love's shroud ;  
Whiter than the morning sky,  
Whiter than the evening cloud.  
My love is dead,  
Gone to his death-bed,  
All under the willow tree !

Here, upon my true love's grave,  
Shall the barren flowers be laid ;  
Not one holy saint to save  
All the coldness of a maid.  
My love is dead,  
Gone to his death-bed,  
All under the willow tree !

With my hands I'll twist the briers  
Round his holy corpse to gree ;  
Elfin fairy, light your fires,  
Here my body still shall be  
My love is dead,  
Gone to his death-bed,  
All under the willow tree !

THOMAS CHATTERTON

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,  
Drain my heart's blood away;  
Life and all its goods I scorn,  
Dance by night, or feast by day.  
My love is dead,  
Gone to his death-bed,  
All under the willow tree!

Water-witches, crown'd with reeds,  
Bear me to your deadly tide  
I die! I come! my true love waits!—  
Thus the damsel spoke, and died.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

Chatterton was brought up in the town of Bristol, and in a great measure it was owing to the influence of the antiquities of his native city, and particularly of the well known Church of St Mary Redcliff with its beautiful Gothic traceries, that there was born the boy's passion for the Middle Ages. His life is one of the most tragic in literary history, and ends in the taking of his own life owing to the absence of people about him who were clear thinking enough to perceive his latent promise. The boy's mind is saturated and infected with the influences of the mediæval antiquities beside him, to such an extent that he perpetrated a series of literary forgeries, attributed by Chatterton to a fictitious Thomas Rowley, a personage invented by him in order to take over the burden of his fifteenth century imaginings. In due course he falls under the spell of that fatal lure of the young idea throughout the ages—London. There he goes, fondly thinking that he would speedily gain a

## THOMAS CHATTERTON

livelihood through his pen. He was soon terribly disappointed, and his most fatal enemy, beyond even hunger, was the fatal pride preventing him from receiving the kindness even of friends, and worst and most silly of all—his kind old landlady.

The poem we have chosen to represent Chatterton reminds us of the Elizabethan lyrics, especially those interspersed among the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The spelling has been slightly modernized, but there is no doubting that its temper does not belong to the eighteenth century but is that of another age totally distinct and different. Chatterton in fact has been called by critics—"the strayed Elizabethan." In spite of much adverse criticism, and the difficult language the author of the Rowley poems has the stuff of great poetry in him. Perhaps there is no other poet of this time so able to catch the mediæval spirit as "the marvellous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his 'pride'," as Wordsworth called him. He stands inferior to Keats in point of sheer poetry. But there is no other who has so managed to recapture the spirit of the past, and as such he is safe among the significant precursors of romanticism.

*The Curate*

. . . . .  
Better, apprenticed to an humble trade,  
Had he the cassock for the priesthood made,  
Or thrown the shuttle, or the saddle shaped,  
And all these pangs of feeling souls escaped  
He once had hope—Hope, ardent, lively, light;  
Eager of fame, he read, he thought, he wrote,  
Weigh'd the Greek page, and added note on note.  
At morn, at evening, at his work was he,  
And dream'd what his Euripides would be

Then care began:—he loved, he woo'd, he wed;  
Hope cheer'd him still, and Hymen bless'd his bed—  
A curate's bed! then came the woful years;  
The husband's terrors, and the father's tears.  
A wife grown feeble, mourning, pining, vex'd  
With wants and woes—by daily cares perplex'd;  
No more a help, a smiling, soothing aid,  
But boding, drooping, sickly, and afraid,

A kind physician, and without a fee,  
Gave his opinion—"Send her to the sea."  
"Alas!" the good man answer'd, "can I send  
A friendless woman? Can I find a friend?  
No; I must with her, in her need, repair  
To that new place; the poor lie everywhere;—  
Some priest will pay me for my pious pains:"—

He said, he came, and here he yet remains.

Behold his dwelling ! this poor hut he hires,  
Where he from view, though not from want, retires ;  
Where four fair daughters, and five sorrowing sons,  
Partake his sufferings, and dismiss his duns ,  
All join their efforts, and in patience learn  
To want the comforts they aspire to earn ;  
For the sick mother something they'd obtain,  
To soothe her grief and mitigate her pain ,  
The sad father something they'd procure  
To ease the burden they themselves endure.  
Virtues like these at once delight and press  
On the fond father with a proud distress ;  
On all around he looks with care and love,  
Grieved to behold, but happy to approve.

Then from his care, his love, his grief, he steals,  
And by himself an Author's pleasure feels .  
Each line detains him ; he omits not one,  
And all the sorrows of his state are gone.—  
Alas ! even then, in that delicious hour,  
He feels his fortune, and laments its powers  
Some Tradesman's bill his wandering eyes engage,  
Some scrawl for payment thrust 'twixt page and page  
Some bold, loud rapping at his humble door,  
Awake, alarm, and tell him he is poor.

An angry Dealer, vulgar, rich and proud,  
Thinks of his bill, and, passing, raps aloud :  
The elder daughter meekly makes him way—  
“ I want my money, and I cannot stay :



My mill is stopp'd, what, Miss! I cannot grind,  
 Go tell your father he must raise the wind;"

Still trembling, troubled, the dejected maid  
 Says, "Sir I my father!"—and then stops afraid.  
 E'en his hard heart is soften'd, and he hears  
 Her voice with pity; he respects her tears,  
 His stubborn features half admit a smile,  
 And his tone softens—"Well! I'll wait awhile."

Pity! a man so good, so mild, so meek,  
 At such an age, should have his bread to seek;  
 And all those rude and fierce attacks to dread,  
 That are more harrowing than the want of bread  
 Ah! who shall whisper to that misery peace!  
 And say that want and insolence shall cease?

. . . . .

*The Various Worth of Catherine Lloyd*

Down by the church-way walk, and where the brook  
 Winds round the chancel like a shepherd's crook,  
 In that small house, with those green pales before  
 Where jasmine trails on either side the door,  
 Where those dark shrubs, that now grow wild at will,  
 Were clipp'd in form and tantalised with skill;  
 Where cockles blanch'd and pebbles neatly spread,  
 Form'd shining borders for the larkspurs' bed,—  
 There lived a Lady, wise, austere, and nice,  
 Who show'd her virtue by her scorn of vice;  
 In the dear fashions of her youth she dress'd,

A pea-green Joseph was her favourite vest ;  
 Erect she stood, she walk'd with stately mien,  
 Tight was her length of stays, and she was tall and lean  
 There long she lived in maiden-state immured,  
 From looks of love and treacherous man secured  
 Though evil fame—(but what was long before)  
 Had blown her dubious blast at Catherine's door .  
 A Captain thither, rich from India came,  
 And though a cousin call'd, it touch'd her fame :  
 Her annual stipend rose from his behest,  
 And all the long-prized treasures she possess'd .—  
 If aught like joy awhile appear'd to stay  
 In that stern face, and chase those frowns away,  
 'Twas when her treasures she disposed for view  
 And heard the praises to their spendour due  
 Silks beyond price, so rich, they'd stand alone,  
 And diamonds blazing on the buckled zone ,  
 Rows of rare pearls by curious workmen set,  
 And bracelets fair in box of glossy jet .  
 Bright polish'd amber precious from its size,  
 Or forms the fairest fancy could devise .  
 Her drawers of cedar, shut with secret springs  
 Conceal'd the watch of gold and rubied rings ;  
 Letters, long proofs of love, and verses fine  
 Round the pink'd rims of crisped Valentine.  
 Her china-closet, cause of daily care,  
 For woman's wonder held her pencill'd ware ;  
 That pictured wealth of China and Japan,  
 Like its cold mistress, shunn'd the eye of man

Her neat small room, adorn'd with maiden-taste  
 A clipp'd French puppy, first of favourites, graced.  
 A parrot next, but dead and stuff'd with art;  
 (For Poll, when living, lost the Lady's heart,  
 And then his life; for he was heard to speak  
 Such frightful words as tinged his Lady's cheek.)  
 Unhappy bird! who had no power to prove,  
 Save by such speech, his gratitude and love.  
 A gray old cat his whiskers lick'd beside;  
 A type of sadness in the house of pride  
 The polish'd surface of an Indian chest,  
 A glassy globe, in frame of ivory, press'd  
 Where swam two finny creatures; one of gold,  
 Of silver one; both beauteous to behold:—  
 All these were form'd the guiding taste to suit,  
 The beast well-manner'd and the fishes mute.  
 A widow'd Aunt was there, compell'd by need  
 The nymph to flatter and her tribe to feed,  
 Who veiling well her scorn, endured the clog,  
 Mute as the fish and fawning as the dog.  
 As years increased, these treasures, her delight,  
 Arose in value in their owner's sight.  
 A miser knows that, view it as he will,  
 A guinea kept is but a guinea still;  
 And so he puts it to its proper use,  
 That something more this guinea may produce;  
 But silks and rings, in the possessor's eyes,  
 The oft'ner seen, the more in value rise,  
 And thus are wisely hoarded to bestow

The kind of pleasure that with years will grow.

But what avail'd their worth—if worth had they  
In the summer of her slow decay?

Then we beheld her turn an anxious look  
From trunks and chests, and fix it on her book,—  
A rich-bound Book of Prayer the Captain gave,  
(Some Princess had it, or was said to have.)  
And then once more on all her stores look round,  
And draw a sigh so piteous and profound,  
That told, "Alas! how hard from these to part,  
And for new hopes and habits from the heart!  
What shall I do (she cried), my peace of mind  
To gain in dying, and to die resign'd?"

"Hear", we return'd;—"these baubles cast aside,  
Nor give thy God a rival in thy pride;  
Thy closets shut, and ope thy kitchen's door;  
*There* own thy failings, *here* invite the poor.  
A friend of Mammon let thy bounty make,  
For widows' prayers, thy vanities forsake,  
And let the hungry of thy pride partake.  
Then shall thy inward eye with joy survey  
The angel Mercy tempering Death's delay!"

Alas! 'twas hard; the treasures still had charms.  
Hope still its flattery, sickness its alarms;  
Still was the same unsettled, clouded view,  
And the same plaintive cry, "What shall I do?"

Nor change appear'd; for when her race was run  
Doubtful we all exclaim'd, "What has been done?"  
Apart she lived, and still she lies alone.

## GEORGE CRABBE

Yon earthly heap awaits the flattering stone  
On which invention shall be long employ'd,  
To show the various worth of *Catherine Lloyd*

## GEORGE CRABBE

Crabbe received high commendation by no less a person than Lord Byron, who named him "Nature's sternest Painter, yet the best." His early struggles resemble in many respects those of Charles Dickens, since, before being kind to him destiny ordained that he should experience an exceedingly difficult early life, with many ups and downs and much drudgery. London was the lure which attracted him most, and in April 1780 he set forth like many a young aspirant before, and since, to try his fortune. It may be remembered another great writer, this time in France, set forth for that nation's capital city with six pence worth, or its equivalent, in his pocket, namely, Alexandre Dumas. Crabbe went through the mill with almost as much anguish as the unfortunate boy-poet Chatterton, but he bore it all bravely and steadfastly. In the end he was however fortunate to secure no less a patron than the great Edmund Burke himself. It was in 1783 that there appeared *The Village*. This poem had already been read and corrected by Johnson and Burke. It gained an enormous and complete success, while extracts from some of the famous descriptions of the poem recording social abuses of the time found print in some of the leading periodicals. Crabbe has made his name by these realistic vignettes of the seamy side of life as he had seen and knew it. He set himself to destroy the romantic illusion of the pastoral tradition of English poetry that Goldsmith so recently had revived in his *Deserted Village*. The illusion of course had been further assisted and promoted by no less a personage than the great Jean Jacques Rousseau himself. The picture set up was one of rustic happiness and innocence, that complete idealization of the country-side that omitted

all the squalor and the ups and downs, the wretchedness and painful struggle for a livelihood. Crabbe was extremely disturbed and indignant because of the agreeable and cruelly optimistic picture that passed for authentic creation of conditions existing in the English country-side. Crabbe knew from personal observation, and knowledge, the dire poverty and neglect with which the villagers must be content because of indifferent landlords, and how their health remained neglected because of the indifference of the doctors, where their bodies were concerned, and of their souls, by the clergy.

Crabbe has been called an implacable realist. In the extract before us it has been the purpose to give a slightly less harsh vignette. We have here a life in miniature of a lady living somewhat isolated and alone in the village. This, however, is not so much the case as first seems apparent, since she is one of those persons for whom memories are more living than the realities of everyday. Crabbe's picture is detailed and one obviously drawn from the life. It is a convincing picture that he gives, and one that may make us ponder as to the true value of the philosophy that went to produce "*The Various Worth of Catherine Lloyd*."

*The Grey Monk*

"I see, I see," the Mother said,  
"My children shall die for lack of bread!  
What more has the merciless tyrant said?"  
The Monk sat down on her stony bed

His eye was dry, no tears could flow,  
A hollow groan bespoke his woe;  
At length a feeble cry he said:  
He trembled and shuddered upon the bed—

"When God commanded this hand to write  
In the shadowy hours of deep midnight,  
He told me that all I wrote should prove  
The bane of all that on earth I love.

"My brother starved between two walls,  
Thy children's cry my soul appals  
I mock at the rack and the grinding chain;  
My bent body mocks at their torturing pain

"Thy father drew his words in the North,  
With his thousands strong he is marched forth  
Thy brother has armed himself in steel,  
To avenge the wrongs thy children feel

"But vain the sword and vain the bow,  
They never can work war's overthrow.  
The Hermit's prayer and the widow's tear  
Alone can free the world from fear."

WILLIAM BLAKE

The hand of vengeance sought the bed  
To which the purple tyrant fled;  
The iron hand crushed the tyrant's head,  
And became a tyrant in his stead.

Until the tyrant himself relent,  
The tyrant who the first black bow bent,  
Slaughter shall heap the bloody plain;  
Resistance and war is the tyrant's gain.

But the tear of love and forgiveness sweet,  
And submission to death beneath his feet,  
The tear shall melt the sword of steel,  
And every wound it has made shall heal

For the tear is an intellectual thing,  
And a sigh is the word of an Angel King;  
And the bitter groan of a martyr's woe  
Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.

*The Garden of Love*

I went to the Garden of Love,  
And saw what I never had seen,  
A Chapel was built in the midst,  
Where I used to play on the green



And the gates of this Chapel were shut,  
 And "Thou shalt not" writ over the door;  
 So I turned to the Garden of Love  
 That so many sweet flowers bore

And I saw it was filled with graves,  
 And tombstones where flowers should be;  
 And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
 And binding with briars my joys and desires.

### *The Tiger*

Tiger, tiger, burning bright  
 In the forests of the night,  
 What immortal hand or eye  
 Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
 Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
 On what wings dare he aspire?  
 What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art  
 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
 And, when thy heart began to beat,  
 What dread hand forged thy dread feet?

WILLIAM BLAKE

What the hammer? What the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? What dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did He smile His work to see?  
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

WILLIAM BLAKE

Among all those who foreshadow the Romantics, William Blake stands out conspicuous as a poet of sheer imagination and powers identifiable with those of a seer. He stands apart from the other poets of his time, and he appears at a moment which was not helpful to his proper recognition, and was only recognized years later as the great poet-mystic and visionary. In addition to his fame as a poet his fame as an engraver was also considerable. The illustrations he made for his poems reveal an artist of extraordinary and unique power. Perhaps one of the most remarkable sets of poems of Blake are his *Songs of Innocence* where through the mouths of little children he expresses his feeling of faith and tenderness and joy at the beauty of the world. In these songs Blake makes much use of symbols, one that is dearest to him among many symbols is that of *The Lamb* which represents his idea of the child Jesus and the spirit of gentleness.

## WILLIAM BLAKE

As with Chatterton, Blake's poetry derives much from Elizabethan tradition, but he uses symbols to express something far more profound than they could have approached. Blake's supreme faith was that "the world of imagination is the world of eternity" It has been truly said that Blake combines the highest forms of mysticism with an intensely luminous simplicity

*The Banks of Doon**(First Version)*

## I

Ye flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,  
How can ye bloom sae fair;  
How can ye chant, ye little birds,  
And I sae fu' o' care!

## II

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird,  
That sings upon the bough,  
Though mends me o' the happy days  
When my fause luvie was true.

## III

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird,  
That sings beside thy mate;  
For sae I sat, and sae I sang.  
And wist na o' my fate

## IV

Aft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon,  
To see the woodbine twine,  
And ilka bird sang o' its love;  
And sae did I o' mine.

## ROBERT BURNS

### V

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,  
 Frae off its thorny tree;  
 And my fause luvver staw the rose  
 But left the thorn wi' me.

## ROBERT BURNS

'Burns,' says Prof Oliver Elton, 'lived nearer to the brown earth, upturned for sowing and crowded with life, than any other of our poets.' This cannot be denied. Nowhere in modern times has the spirit of the open air been breathed so spontaneously and felicitously. Burns assists tremendously in the revolt against the imposed eighteenth century tyranny of poetic diction. He uses words that are no longer stiff, out of date, and feeble, but instead, those that are racy, fresh and forcible, always using language that should give the clearest impression of that which he wishes to convey. He is one of the most musical poets in the whole range of English literature. Carlyle thought so highly of Burns that he presents him as one of his types of "*The Hero as Man of Letters*." What he thought of Burns and what he accomplished the following will serve to show.

"Poetry we would call Musical Thought. See deep enough and you see musically, the heart of Nature being everywhere Music, if you can only reach it."

Wordsworth also thought very highly of Burns and speaks of him as "the great genius who had brought poetry back to nature"

*Proud Maisie*

Proud Maisie is in the wood,  
Walking so early.  
Sweet Robin sits on the bush  
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,  
When shall I marry me?  
'When six braw gentlemen  
Kirkward shall carry ye'

'Who makes the bridal bed,  
Birdie, say truly?'  
'The gray-headed sexton  
That delves the grave duly

'The glow-worm o'er grave and stone  
Shall light thee steady,  
The owl from the steeple sing—  
Welcome, proud lady'

*Lines from 'Marmion'*

Thus, while I ape the measures wild  
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,  
Rude though they be, still with the chime  
Return the thoughts of early time;  
And feeling roused in life's first day

Glow in the line and prompt the lay.  
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower  
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour.  
Though no broad river swept along,  
To claim, perchance, heroic song;  
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,  
To prompt of love a softer tale;  
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed  
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed;  
Yet was poetic impulse given  
By the green hill and clear blue heaven  
It was a barren scene, and wild,  
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;  
But ever and anon between  
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;  
And well the lonely infant knew  
Recesses where the well-flower grew,  
And honeysuckle loved to crawl  
Up the low crag and ruined wall.  
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade  
The sun in all its round surveyed:  
And still I thought that shuttered tower  
The mightiest work of human power;  
And, marvelled, as the aged hind  
With some strange tale bewitched my mind,  
Of foragers who, with headlong force,  
Down from that strength had spurred their horse  
Their southern rapine to renew,  
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,

## SIR WALTER SCOTT

Whose doom discording neighbours sought  
Content with equity unbought ;  
To him, the venerable Priest  
Our frequent and familiar guest  
Whose life and manners well could paint  
Alike the student and the saint ;  
Alas ; whose speech too oft I broke  
With gambol rude and timeless joke ;  
For I was wayward, bold and wild,  
A self-willed imp, a grand-dame's child,  
But, half a plague and half a jest,  
Was still endured, beloved, carest.

## SIR WALTER SCOTT

The poetry of Scott lies neglected today, and his prose too for that matter. For most of us he has come to be regarded as a kind of museum piece, worthy of our attention after much tedium and tribulation of the spirit. So much are we weighed down under contemporary usage and custom that one who seems caught out as an offender against the most sacred laws that govern the artistic conscience of our day deserves scant respect, and gets it. Over in France, Dumas who owed so much to Scott is in the same plight. In the arrogance of youth and a new found ruthlessness they have gone to the rubbish-heap of the children's hour. It has been left to the professors to restore some degree of proportion into the evaluation of past greatness. As a poet Professor Elton tells us that for him Scott "is the greatest of our lyric poets between Blake or Burns, and Shelley."

One thing quite definitely we have to do if we would discover the beauty and the worth of Scott—we must put away our sophistication, and our



snobbery. Something we must recover is the enthusiasm and belief of that friend of Scott, James Hogg, the *Etrick* shepherd as they called him. In verse that, if at times pedestrian, has a strong historical importance, he tells us how:

The land was charmed to list his lays,  
It knew the harp of ancient days  
The Border chiefs, that long had been  
In sepulchres unheard and green,  
Passed from their mouldy vaults away  
In armour red, and stern array

We have to understand that Scott and Byron between them mark the culmination of the Romantic Triumph in English literature, a triumph carried into the innermost recesses of Continental Europe.

It is Scott's lyric gift that today has come to be most appreciated in the estimate of his contribution to English letters. It possesses a range that is considerable. The macabre element that Scott found during his researches in the ballad literature he made peculiarly his own. One lyric in which this element appears, a critic has observed, as being "quite one of the greatest poems in the English language." *Proud Marie* certainly repays study, and what will appear after a while as quite remarkable is the surprising economy with which it achieves its tragic intensity.

Scott possessed a capacity for story-telling in quite a unique degree. He is remembered, even in his poetry, more for this gift than for that of a high imaginative muse which a Shelley might be said to possess but which he did not. Again we may look for no such power of condensation, miracle-working gifts of phrase and metaphor such as Keats possessed to a remarkable degree. But what he lacks in these qualities he makes splendid amends in the vividness of his nature-pictures, the heroic mould of his characters, and the galloping wonderful rhythms of his action poems—*Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and *The Lord of the Isles*.

*Kubla Khan*

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree :  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round :  
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !  
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was forced,  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momently the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,

Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean -  
 And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
 Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of dome of pleasure  
 Floated midway on the waves  
 Where was heard the mingled measure  
 From the fountain and the caves

It was a miracle of rare device,  
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!  
 A damsel with a dulcimer  
 In a vision once I saw  
 It was an Abyssinian maid,  
 And on her dulcimer she played,  
 Singing of Mount Abora.  
 Could I revive within me  
 Her symphony and song,  
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me,

That with music loud and long,  
 I would build that dome in air,  
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
 That all who heard should see them there,  
 And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
 Weave a circle round him thrice,  
 And close your eyes with holy dread,  
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

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*Frost at Midnight*

The frost performs its secret ministry,  
Unhelped by any wind The owl's cry  
Came loud—and hark, again, loud as before  
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,  
Have left me to that solitude, which suits  
Abstruser musings. save that at my side  
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully  
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs  
And vexes meditation with its strange  
And extreme silentness Sea, hill, and wood,  
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,  
With all the numberless goings on of life  
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame  
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not;  
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,  
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing  
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature  
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,  
Making it a companionable form  
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit  
By its own moods interprets, every where  
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,  
And makes a toy of Thought  
But O! how oft,  
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,  
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,  
To watch that fluttering stranger! and as oft

With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt  
 Of my sweet birthplace, and the old church-tower  
 Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang  
 From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day  
 So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me  
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear  
 Most like articulate sounds of things to come!  
 So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt  
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!  
 And so I brooded all the following morn,  
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye  
 Fixed with mock study on my swimming book  
 Save if the door half opened, and I snatched  
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,  
 For still I hoped to see the stranger's face,  
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,  
 My playmate when we both were clothed alike!  
 Dear babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,  
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm  
 Fill up the interspersed vacancies  
 And momentary pauses of the thought!  
 My babe so beautiful!—it thrills my heart  
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,  
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore  
 And in far other scenes! For I was reared  
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,  
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars  
 But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze  
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Of ancient mountains, and beneath the clouds,  
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores  
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear  
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
Of that eternal language, which thy God  
Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
Himself in all, and all things in Himself.  
Great Universal Teacher! he shall mould  
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask  
Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,  
Whether the summer clothe the general earth  
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing  
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch  
Of mossy apple tree, while the night that  
Smokes in the sun-thaw, whether the eve-drops fall  
Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
Or if the secret ministry of frost  
Shall hang them up in silent icicles  
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon (1798)

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Historically, perhaps, Coleridge is most famous in literature for his association with the *Lyrical Ballads*, the joint production of Wordsworth and himself in the form of an experimental anthology intended to 'lend charm of imagination to a true picture of real nature'. Coleridge, it was agreed, was to be in charge of 'charm of the imagination' portion. Romance and the romantic idea had fallen into oblivion, and it was the great ambition



of the two poets to rescue it from the evil days on which it had fallen and to bring back once more the twin spirits of beauty and romance into a world that had for nearly a century kicked them out of doors. Both poets are concerned with man, and of interest in his varying emotions—"they deliberately make the human soul the centre of art."

It is not generally realized how much Wordsworth's pantheism owes to Coleridge. A study of this poem alongside those of Wordsworth included in this selection will make all plain.

.....so shalt thou see and hear  
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
Of that eternal language, which thy God  
Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
Himself in all, and all things in Himself

There breathes as much the spirit of Vedanta as in Wordsworth's.

A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought  
And rolls through all things

But Coleridge retains his place in the affection and interest of posterity mostly on account of his dream poetry. In this mood *Kubla Khan* and *The Ancient Mariner* are the most famous

POEMS AND LYRICS  
WORDSWORTH TO MASEFIELD

.

Flowed in upon me, from all sides ; fresh day  
 Of pride and pleasure I to myself I seemed  
 A man of business and expense, and went  
 From shop to shop about my own affairs,  
 To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,  
 From street to street with loose and careless mind

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream ; I roamed  
 Delighted through the motley spectacle ;  
 Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,  
 Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways, towers :  
 Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,  
 A northern villager.

As if the change  
 Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once  
 Behold me rich in monies, and attired  
 In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and hair  
 Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is keen  
 My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by,  
 With other signs of manhood that supplied  
 The lack of beard — The weeks went roundly on,  
 With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,  
 Smooth housekeeping within, and all without  
 Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was •  
 Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first  
 Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure ;  
 Right underneath, the College kitchens made  
 A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,

But hardly less industrious, with shrill notes  
 Of sharp command and scolding intermixed.  
 Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,  
 Who never let the quarters, night or day,  
 Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the hours  
 Twice over with a male and female voice.  
 Her pealing organ was my neighbour too;  
 And from my pillow, looking forth by light  
 Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold  
 The antechapel where the statue stood  
 Of Newton with his prism and silent face,  
 The marble index of a mind for ever  
 Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's room  
 All studded round, as thick as chairs could stand,  
 With loyal students faithful to their books,  
 Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,  
 And honest dunces—of important days,  
 Examinations, when the man was weighed  
 As in a balance! of excessive hopes,  
 Tremblings withal and commendable fears,  
 Small jealousies, and triumphs good or bad—  
 Let others that know more speak as they know,  
 Such glory was but little sought by me,  
 And little won. Yet from the first crude days  
 Of settling time in this untried abode,  
 I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,  
 Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears

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 And little won Yet from the first crude days  
 Of settling time in this untried abode,  
 I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,  
 Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears

About my future worldly maintenance,  
 And, more than all, a strangeness in the mind,  
 A feeling that I was not for that hour,  
 Nor for that place.

. . . . .  
 . . . . .let me dare to speak  
 A higher language, say that now I felt  
 What independent solaces were mine,  
 To mitigate the injurious sway of place  
 Or circumstance, how far soever changed  
 In youth, or to be changed in after years,  
 As if awakened, summoned, roused, constrained,  
 I looked for universal things: perused  
 The common countenance of earth and sky:  
 Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace  
 Of that first paradise whence man was driven;  
 And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed  
 By the proud name she bears—the name of Heaven  
 I called on both to teach me what they might;  
 Or turning the mind in upon herself,  
 Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread my thoughts  
 And spread them with a wider creeping; felt  
 Incumbencies more awful, visitings  
 Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,  
 That tolerates the indignities of Time,  
 And, from the centre of eternity  
 All finite motions overruling, lives  
 In glory immutable But peace I enough  
 Here to record that I was mounting now

To such community with highest truth—  
 A track pursuing, not untrod before,  
 From strict analogies by thought supplied  
 Or consciousness not to be subdued  
 To every natural form, rock, fruit, or flower,  
 Even the loose stones that cover the highway,  
 I gave a moral life. I saw them feel,  
 Or linked them to some feeling; the great mass  
 Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all  
 That I beheld respired with inward meaning  
 Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love  
 Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on  
 From transitory passion, unto this  
 I was as sensitive as waters are  
 To the sky's influence in a kindred mood  
 Of passion: was obedient as a lute  
 That waits upon the touches of the wind.  
 Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most rich—  
 I had a world about me—'twas my own,  
 I made it, for it only lived to me,

*A Mountain Vision*

*(From 'The Excursion')*

So he was lifted gently from the ground,  
 And with their freight the shepherds homeward moved



Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,  
 A single step, that freed me from the skirts  
 Of the blind vapour, opened to my view  
 Glory beyond all glory ever seen  
 By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !  
 The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,  
 Was of a mighty city—boldly say  
 A wilderness of building, sinking far  
 And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,  
 Far sinking into splendour—without end !  
 Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
 With alabaster domes, and silver spires,  
 And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
 Uplifted ; here, serene pavilions bright,  
 In avenues disposed ; there, towers begirt  
 With battlements that on their restless fronts  
 Bore stars—illumination of all gems !  
 By earthly nature had the effect been wrought  
 Upon the dark materials of the storm  
 Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves  
 And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto  
 The vapours had receded, taking there  
 Their station under a cerulean sky.  
 Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight !  
 Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks, and emerald turf,  
 Clouds of all tincture rocks and sapphire sky,  
 Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,  
 Molten together, and composing thus,  
 Each lost in each, that marvellous array

Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge  
 Fantastic pomp of structure without name,  
 In fleecy folds voluminous enwrapped  
 Right in the midst, where interspace appeared  
 Of open court, on object like a throne  
 Under a shining canopy of state  
 Stood fixed; and fixed resemblances were seen  
 To implements of ordinary use,  
 But vast in size, in substance glorified,  
 Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld  
 In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power  
 Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler power  
 Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend  
 Even here, where her amenities are sown  
 With sparing hand Then trust yourself abroad  
 To range her blooming bowers, and spacious fields,  
 Where on the labours of the happy throng  
 She smiles, including in her wild embrace  
 City, and town, and tower,—and sea with ships  
 Sprinkled;—be our Companion while we track  
 Her rivers populous with gilded life;  
 While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march,  
 And pierce the gloom of her majestic woods;  
 Roaming, or resting under grateful shade  
 In peace and meditative cheerfulness;  
 Where living things, and things inanimate  
 Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear,  
 And speak to social reason's inner sense,  
 With inarticulate language.

For the Man—

Who, in this spirit, communes, with the Forms  
 Of nature, who with understanding heart  
 Doth know and love such objects as excite  
 No morbid passions, no disquietude,  
 No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel  
 The joy of that pure principle of love  
 So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught  
 Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose  
 But seek for objects of a kindred love  
 In fellow-natures and kindred joy  
 Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
 His feelings of aversion softened down;  
 A holy tenderness pervades his frame.  
*His sanity of reason not impaired,*  
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,  
 From a clean fountain flowing, he looks round  
 And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks.  
 Until abhorrence and contempt are things  
 He only knows by name; and, if he hear,  
 From other mouths, the language which they speak  
 He is compassionate; and has no thought,  
 No feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further; by contemplating these Forms  
 In the relation which they bear to man,  
 He shall discern, how, through the various means  
 Which silently they yield, are multiplied  
 The spiritual presences of absent things

Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come  
 When they shall meet no object but may teach  
 Some acceptable lesson to their minds,  
 Of human suffering, or of human joy.  
 For them shall all things speak of man ; they read  
 Their duties in all forms , and general laws,  
 And local accidents, shall tend alike  
 To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will, confer  
 The ability to spread the blessing wide  
 Of true philanthropy. The light of love  
 Not failing, perseverance from their steps  
 Departing not, they shall at length obtain  
 The glorious habit by which sense is made  
 Subservient still to moral purposes,  
 Auxiliar to divine. That change shall clothe  
 The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore  
 The burthen of existence Science then  
 Shall be a precious visitant , and then,  
 And only then, be worthy of her name  
 For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull eye,  
 Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang  
 Chained to its object in brute slavery ;  
 But taught with patient interest to watch  
 The processes of things, and serve the cause  
 Of order and distinctness, not for this  
 Shall it forget that its most noble use,  
 Its most illustrious province, must be found  
 In furnishing clear guidance, a support  
 Not treacherous, to the mind's excursive power.

—So build we up the Being that we are ;  
 Thus deeply drinking—in the soul of things,  
 We shall be wise perforce ; and, while inspired  
 By choice, and conscious that the Will is free,  
 Unswerving shall we move as if impelled  
 By strict necessity, along the path  
 Of order and of good    Whate'er we see,  
 Whate'er we feel, by agency direct  
 Or indirect, shall tend to feed and nurse  
 Our faculties, shall fix in calmer seats  
 Of moral strength, and raise to loftier heights  
 Of love divine, our intellectual soul.

*The Holy Powers of Quietude*

O blest seclusion ! when the mind admits  
 The law of duty : and thereby can live  
 Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
 Linked in entire complacence with her choice .  
 When youth's presumptuousness is mellowed down,  
 And Manhood's vain anxiety dismissed .  
 When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,  
 Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung  
 In sober plenty : when the spirit stoops  
 To drink with gratitude the crystal stream  
 Of unreprieved enjoyment : and is pleased  
 To muse, and be saluted by the air  
 Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower scents

From out the crumbling ruins of fallen pride  
 And chambers of transgression, now forlorn  
 O, calm, contented days, and peaceful nights  
 Who, when such good can be obtained, would strive  
 To reconcile his manhood to a couch  
 Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,  
 Stuffed with the thorny substance of the past  
 For fixed annoyance ! and full oft beset  
 With floating dreams, disconsolate and black,  
 The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

Within the soul a faculty abides,  
 That with interpositions, which would hide  
 And darken, so can deal that they become  
 Contingencies of pomp : and serve to exalt  
 Her native brightness. As the ample moon,  
 In the deep stillness of a summer even,  
 Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,  
 Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,  
 In the green trees • and, kindling on all sides  
 Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil  
 Into a substance glorious as her own,  
 Yea, with her own incorporated, by power  
 Capacious and serene. Like power abides  
 In man's celestial spirits • virtue thus  
 Sets forth and magnifies herself thus feeds  
 A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,  
 From the incumbrances of mortal life,  
 From error, disappointment—nay, from guilt :

And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
From palpable oppressions of despair.

\* \* \*

Here you stand,

Adore, and worship, when you know it not :  
Pious beyond the intention of your thought,  
Devout above the meaning of your will  
—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel  
The estate of man would be indeed forlorn  
If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
Made the eye blind, and closed the passages  
Through which the ear converses with the heart  
Has not the soul, the being of your life  
Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks  
At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky,  
To rest upon their *circumambient* walls  
A temple framing of dimensions vast,  
And yet not too enormous for the sound  
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst  
Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
To glorify the Eternal? What if these  
Did never break the stillness that prevails  
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,  
And the soft woodlark here did never chant  
Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide  
Impulse and utterance. The whispering air

Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,  
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks :  
 The little rills, and waters numberless,  
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes  
 With the loud streams · and often, at the hour  
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,  
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
 One voice—the solitary raven, flying  
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,  
 Unseen, perchance above the power of sight—  
 An iron knell ! and still fainter—as the cry, with which  
 The wanderer accompanies her flight  
 Through the calm region, fades upon the ear  
 Diminishing by distance till it seemed  
 To expire : yet from the abyss is caught again,  
 And yet again recovered !

But descending

From those imaginative heights, that yield  
 Far stretching views into eternity,  
 For admiration and mysterious awe  
 Below me was the earth, this little vale  
 Lay low beneath my feet · 'twas visible—  
 I saw not, but I felt that it was there.  
 That which I saw was the revealed abode  
 Of spirits in beatitude · my heart  
 Swelled in my breast,—'I have been dead,' I cried  
 'And now I live !' oh ! wherefore do I live ?



## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

—But I forgot our Charge, as utterly  
I then forgot him:—there I stood and gazed:  
The apparition faded not away,  
And I descended.

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

"Wordsworth and Coleridge together with Blake," says Prof Herford, "took up and developed with finer insight those harmonies between man and external nature which Rousseau had been the first vividly to perceive." In saying this he has given us a key to Wordsworth's poetry, namely, the harmony existing between man and the external nature. We see therefore Wordsworth as a disciple of Rousseau on the one hand, and on the other he also owed something to Godwin. His, however, was a finer insight than that of his master, and we may see a good deal of Platonism behind the best of his work. The proper study of mankind was in Wordsworth's case *not* man whether of one nationality or another. Rather it embraced all nature of which human nature is only a part. Wordsworth was therefore really a great break-away from the thought of the eighteenth century dominated as it was latterly by the philosophy of Boileau and Pope. It was a break-away in two directions, first in diction, and second in thought. He was not satisfied with the formal landscape that the eighteenth century had endeared to the cultured man, nor to the formal versification dear to the man of letters. Wordsworth represents along with Coleridge the romantic revolt against the eighteenth century tradition. His attitude is summed up very well for us in the following lines

And 'tis my faith that ev'ry flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes  
If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What Man has made of Man?

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

An amplification of this attitude Wordsworth has set down for us in those remarkable lines that here are brought before you from his great poem *The Excursion*. No one perhaps more than Wordsworth has ever realized the value of the balm brought by quietude. The lines before us tell it plainly in the matured wondrous organ note of Wordsworth's blank verse:

O blest seclusion! when the mind admits  
The law of duty and thereby can live  
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
Linked in entire complacence with her choice  
When youth's presumptuousness is mellowed down,  
And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed

And then again how beautifully the same idea is expressed in this -

O Reader! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing

*The Byronic Hero*

## IV

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,  
Though scar'd by toil, and something touch'd  
by time;

His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,  
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;  
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name  
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame,  
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins,  
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;  
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,  
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

## V

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen,  
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been;  
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,  
And spake of passions, but of passions past;  
The pride, but not the fire, of early days,  
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;  
A high demeanour, and a glance that took  
Their thoughts from others by a single look,  
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,  
The stinging of a heart the world hath strung,  
That darts in seeming playfulness around,  
And makes those feel that will not own the wound;

## LORD BYRON

All these seem'd his, and something more beneath  
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe,  
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim,  
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,  
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,  
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive,  
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace  
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face

### VI

Not much he loved long question of the past,  
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,  
In those far lands where he had wander'd lone,  
And—as himself would have it seem-unknown ;  
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,  
Nor glean experience from his fellow man ;  
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,  
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know ,  
If still more prying such inquiry grew,  
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

### VII

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,  
Warm, was his welcome to the haunts of men ;  
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,  
He mingled with the magnates of his land ;  
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,  
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away ;

But still he only saw, and did not share,  
 The common pleasure or the general care;  
 He did not follow what they all pursued  
 With hope still baffled, still to be renew'd;  
 Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,  
 Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain,  
 Around him some mysterious circle thrown  
 Repell'd approach, and show'd him still alone;  
 Upon his eye sat something of reproof,  
 That kept at least *frivolity aloof*;  
 And things more timid that beheld him near  
 In silence gazed, or whisper'd mutual fear;  
 And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd,  
 They deem'd him better than his air expressed.

## VIII

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,  
 Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife,  
 Woman, the field, the ocean, all that gave  
 Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,  
 In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,  
 And found his recompense in joy or woe.  
 No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought  
 In that intenseness an escape from thought;  
 The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed  
 On that the feeble elements had raised;  
 The rapture of his heart had look'd on high.  
 And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky:

## LORD BYRON

Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,  
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?  
Alas! he told not—but he did awake  
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break.

(From *Lara*)

## LORD BYRON

With Lord Byron we come to a poet, who, for Europe at any rate, was one of the most romantic figures in the world. He became the type of roving melancholy poet, with Byronic collar complete, that has been a figure to conjure with wherever romance flourishes secure. He assumed a pose at times of wickedness, but the complete figure is seen perhaps at its best in the glowing pages of his *Turkish Tales*, *Childe Harold*, and *Don Juan*. Such was his influence in Europe that in France and Germany there grew up the cult of *Byronism*. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that with the exception of Shakespeare and Goethe no man in modern times has so affected the spirit of poetry. Of his poetry today posterity has reversed the judgement of the past, who cherished among his works, his dramas more than any, and after that his oriental tales. Neither of these, however, attract the reader today as do *Don Juan* and the satires. These, and *Childe Harold*, make up the really essential Byron, the rest does not matter very much. Prof. Elton has found three traits which lie behind the secret of Byron's influence: (1) his "Titanism," his rebellious, impassioned self-description and self-assertion. To this instinct, coming straight down to Rousseau and Werther, he gave more potent expression than all other poets put together. (2) Byron the satirist and observer, the Byron of *Don Juan*; and (3) Byron the liberator . . . the advocate of insurgent nationalities. At any rate, it can be said that the essential Byron, as a critic has pointed out "is the author of a body of English poetry, exhibiting, in its metrical diversity, its glittering

execution, its power of observation, its passion for virile virtue, its rarer softnesses and even sobs, amid satires, frolic and excitations, a mastery which is astounding when we remember that the lover, the traveller and the poet was only thirty-six when he died."

Out of such a body of work as Byron has left behind it is difficult to give in brief any specimen really worthy of his achievement, that achievement is best judged by a study of the poems as a whole. All that one can do is, as here, to present an extract from one of his best known works.

*Lines from 'Epipsychidion'*

It is an isle under Ionian skies,  
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,  
And, for the harbours are not safe and good.  
This land would have remained a solitude  
But for some pastoral people native there,  
Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden air  
Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,  
Simple and spirited, innocent and bold  
The blue Aegean birds this chosen home,  
With ever-changing sound and light and foam,  
Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns hoar ;  
And all the winds wandering along the shore  
Undulate with the undulating tide ;  
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide ;  
And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,  
As clear as elemental diamond,  
Or serene morning air ; and far beyond,  
The mossy tracks made by the goats and deer  
(Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year)  
Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls  
Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls  
Illuming with sound that never fails  
Accompany the noonday nightingales ;  
And all the place is peopled with sweet airs ;  
The light clear element which the isle wears  
Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,  
Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers,



And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep ;  
 And from the moss, violets and jonquils peep,  
 And dart their arrowy odour through the brain,  
 Till you might faint with that delicious pain.  
 And every motion, odour, beam and tone,  
 With that deep music is in unison .  
 Which is a soul within the soul—they seem  
 Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—  
 It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth, and Sea,  
 Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity ;  
 Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,  
 Washed by the soft blue oceans of young air  
 It is a favoured place   Famine or Blight,  
 Pestilence, War and Earthquake, never light  
 Upon its mountain-peaks ; blind vultures, they  
 Sail onward far upon their fatal way :  
 The winged storms, chanting their thunder-psalm  
 To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm  
 Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,  
 From which its fields and woods ever renew  
 Their green and golden immortality.  
 And from the sea there rise, and from the sky  
 There fall, clear exhalations, soft and bright,  
 Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,  
 Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside.  
 Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride,  
 Glowing at once with love and loveliness,  
 Blushes and trembles at its own excess :  
 Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less .

Burns in the heart of this delicious isle.  
 An atom of th' Eternal, whose own smile  
 Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen  
 O'er the gray rocks, blue waves, and forests green,  
 Filling their bare and void interstices —  
 But the chief marvel of the wilderness  
 Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how  
 None of the rustic island-people know :  
 'Tis not a tower of strength, though with its height  
 It overtops the woods ; but, for delight,  
 Some wise, and tender Ocean-Kind, ere crime  
 Had been invented, in the world's young prime,  
 Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,  
 An envy of the isles, a pleasure-house  
 Made sacred to his sister and his spouse  
 It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,  
 But, as it were Titanic, in the heart  
 Of Earth having assumed its form, then grown  
 Out of the mountains, from the living stone,  
 Lifting itself in caverns light and high :  
 For all the antique and learned imagery  
 Has been erased, and in the place of it  
 The ivy and the wild-vine interknit  
 The volumes of their many twining stems ;  
 Parasite flowers illumine with dewy gems  
 The lampless halls, and when they fade, the sky  
 Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery  
 With moonlight patches, or star atoms keen,  
 Or fragments of the day's intense serene ;—

Working mosaic on their Parian floors.  
 And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers  
 And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem  
 To sleep in one another's arms, and dream  
 Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks, and all that  
                   we  
 Read in their smiles, and call reality.

*The Indian Serenade*

I arise from dreams of thee  
 In the first sweet sleep of night,  
 When the winds are breathing low,  
 And the stars are shining bright:  
 I arise from dreams of thee,  
 And a spirit in my feet  
 Hath led me—who knows how!  
 To thy chamber window, Sweet!

The wandering airs they faint  
 On the dark, the silent stream—  
 And the Champak odours fail  
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;

The nightingale's complaint,  
 It dies upon her heart;—  
 As I must on thine,  
 O! beloved as thou art!

O lift me from the grass !  
 I die ! I faint ! I fail !  
 Let thy love in kisses rain  
 On my lips and eyelids pale  
 My cheek is cold and white, alas !  
 My heart beats loud and fast ;—  
 Oh ! press it close to thine again,  
 Where it will break at last.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Shelley was a great friend of Lord Byron, but scarcely any two poets with so close a knowledge of each other could be so dissimilar. It has been well said that Shelley's feet are nearly always off the ground as much as Byron's remained on it. The influence of the French Revolution on this group of poets, the elder group, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott and the younger, Byron, Shelley and Keats, was indeed remarkable. Prof Herford tells us "how profoundly the Revolution had disturbed the elder poets while for the younger it had already become history. The ideas and aspirations behind it had passed into Byron and Shelley and kindled humanitarian ardours even in the artist Keats. The fact was, the younger group of poets though further removed from the facts, were closer to the results. Shelley under the impetus of Godwin tried to translate some of these results into resemblance of a practical form for the guidance of a distracted world. Shelley soon becomes imbued with a constant political preoccupation, which sometimes emerges concretely in his poetry, and at other times emerges in more difficult, but resplendent, ambiguities." Prof Bradley says, that "Shelley was one of the few persons who can literally be said to love their kind, and the chief virtue of his poetry lies in a remarkable intuition of the unique value of love in the order of mankind. Love, for him, becomes

identified with that perfection synonymous with the spirit of nature, of liberty, of intellectual beauty. Whatever in the world has any worth is an expression of Love. Love sometimes talks. Love talking musically is poetry." Said Mrs. Shelley after his death "To deprive life of its misery and its evil was the ruling passion of his soul, he dedicated to it every part of his mind, every pulsation of his heart." She also added that Shelley resembled Plato "in that both took more delight in the abstract and ideal than the special and tangible."

Free man and the free mind of man, another critic has pointed out, was Shelley's constant impassioned desire. Shelley was drowned off the coast of Spezia on the 8th July, 1822. "His poetry remains an impressive monument to a boy poet who was dead before he reached the age of early manhood. Into those youthful days he had packed more study, more love, more friendships, more travel, more talk, more music than can befall the normal lot of most mankind."

*Ode on a Grecian Urn*

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare,  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve,  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu,  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new,

More happy love! more happy, happy love!  
 For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,  
 For ever panting, and for ever young;  
 All breathing human passion far above,  
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,  
 A burning forehead, and a parching tongue

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
 To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
 And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?  
 What little town by river or sea-shore,  
 Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
 Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?  
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
 Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede  
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;  
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral?  
 When old age shall this generation waste,  
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st  
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all  
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

*The Joy of Beauty*

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever :  
Its loveliness increases ; it will never  
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing  
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
O all the unhealthy and o'er-darken'd ways  
Made for our searching . yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in , and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season ; the mid-forest brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms :  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead :  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read :  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink  
Nor do we merely feel these essences  
For one short hour ; no, even as the trees  
That whisper round a temple become soon



## JOHN KEATS

Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,  
The passion poesy, glories infinite,  
Haunt us till they become a cheering light  
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,  
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,  
They always must be with us, or we die

(From *Endymion*)

## JOHN KEATS

Here is another poet who has left undying fame in the Pantheon of English poetry, and yet who was dead before he was thirty. It is interesting to notice that Byron was the son of a peer, Shelley of a country baronet, and Keats, of a livery stableman in London by whom he was apprenticed to a surgeon. Perhaps of these three poets Keats makes the most irresistible appeal through his gift of style. Keats's poetic world was opened for him through the agency of a friend, Charles Cowden Clarke who introduced him to Spenser. From Spenser he was led on naturally to the other Elizabethan poets, especially to Chapman, who inspired his great sonnet, *On First Looking Into Chapman's 'Homer'*. Knowing no Greek this introduction however was also the means whereby he became enthusiastically attached to the spell exerted by the Greek poets: it was really his introduction to Hellenism. His first volume of poems was published in 1817 but fell flat. He had only four more years of life remaining, but into this short period there was packed perhaps the greatest single achievement of any poet of this time. The other publications appeared in 1818 including the famous *Endymion*, and in 1820 the more perfect and matured *Hyperion*. Prof Herford of *Hyperion* has said: "In the story of *Hyperion* he found a theme equal in its capacity for epoch grandeur to that of *Paradise Lost* . . . . It would be rash to say what in poetry would have been beyond the reach of one who, at twenty-five, compels the comparison with Shakespeare and Milton, and yet, deeply as he came under the spell, was lifted by their genius only into more complete

## JOHN KEATS

possession of his own " But perhaps the best estimate of Keats' works is that of the late Poet Laureate Mr Robert Bridges who writes of a quality in the poet—"That is the very seal of his poetic birthright, the highest gift of all in poetry, that which sets poetry above the other arts, I mean the power of concentrating all the far-reaching resources of language on one point, so that a single and apparently effortless expression rejoices the aesthetic imagination at the moment when it is most expectant and exacting, and at the same time astonishes the intellect with a new aspect of truth. This is found only in the greatest poets, and is rare in them, and it is no doubt for the possession of this power that Keats has often been likened to Shakespeare, and very justly, for Shakespeare is of all poets the greatest master of it " Keats is perhaps the most Shakespearean of all our poets. One further critic has discerningly said, "The chief end of poetry is to induce transcendental feeling in the poet's patient by throwing him suddenly, for a moment, into a state of dream-consciousness, out of awaking consciousness, which the Poet supplies with objects of interest, the sudden lapse being effected in the patient by the communication to him of images and other products of the Poet's dream-consciousness, through the medium of language " This is a fair and an accurate estimate of the effect Keats' poetry induces in the reader

It has, however, been the effect of inducing the opposite criticism which is that the chief deficiency detracting from Keat's greatness is an absence of the power of pure intellect. That, however, would be vexed debate. Let it suffice to say that Keats' aim in poetry was a very different one to his aim in prose. He kept his intellect, as the everyday term is understood, for his prose, and it may be found in surprising abundance, for those who would seek it, in his letters. He kept something else for his poetry—namely, Keats as the interpreter of Beauty. That beauty was frequently of a magical kind with all the associations that magic and romance carry with it. His aim in fact was to take us to a corner of his room where we might peep eternally through the

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn

*Maud*

. . . . .  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone ;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,  
And the musk of the roses blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
And the planet of Love is on high,  
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves,  
On a bed of daffodil sky,  
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
To faint in his light and to die.

All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon ;  
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune ;  
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the Lily, " There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her alone ?  
She is weary of dance and play."

But the rose was awake all night for your sake,  
 Knowing your promise to me ;  
 The lilies and roses were all awake,  
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,  
 Come hither, the dances are done,  
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
 Queen lily and rose in one ;  
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls  
 To the flowers, and be their sun,

There has fallen a splendid tear  
 From the passion-flower at the gate,  
 She is coming, my dove, my dear ;  
 She is coming, my life, my fate ;  
 The red rose cries, " She is near, she is near."  
 And the white rose weeps, " She is late."  
 The larkspur listens, " I hear, hear",  
 And the lily whispers, " I wait "

She is coming, my own, my sweet :  
 Were it ever so airy a tread,  
 My heart would hear her and beat,  
 Were it earth in an earthly bed  
 My dust would hear her and beat,  
 Had I lain for a century dead ;  
 Would start and tremble under her feet,  
 And blossom in purple and red.

*Come Down, O Maid*

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height -  
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)  
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills?  
But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease  
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,  
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;  
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,  
For Love is of the valley, come thou down  
And find him, by the happy threshold, he,  
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,  
Or red with spirited purple of the vats,  
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cared to walk  
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,  
Nor wilt thou spare him in the white ravine,  
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,  
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls  
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors;  
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down  
To find him in the valley; let the wild  
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave  
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill  
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,  
That like a broken purpose waste in air;  
So waste not thou, but come; for all the vales  
Await thee, azure pillars of the hearth  
Arise to thee; the children call, and I  
The shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,

ALFRED TENNYSON

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet ;  
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,  
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

(From *The Princess*)

*Break, Break, Break*

Break, Break, Break,  
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea !  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play !  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill ;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, Break, Break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.

## ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Tennyson today is somewhat out of fashion. It has been discovered that he is too sentimental, too facile, and with an overfondness for 'poetic-diction'. But for the Victorians Tennyson fulfilled the idea of poetry to the satisfaction of the lower as well as the upper classes. Obviously it would be unfair to judge him by the standards of poetic values as sponsored by Mr T S Eliot, if we did, *Maud* would never be allowed to pass the garden gate.

Who, however, can deny the lyric gift of this laureate bard? Who, too, will deny the passion that makes of *Maud* something that has kinship with the poetry of old Provence, the fevered ecstasy of troubadours, and the courts of love.

But all the old tricks you say are here, alliteration, assonance, onomatopœia, personification, and the rest of the well-worn poet's workshop. True, but thus allowed, we still have left what will remain one of the great lyric forces of the language.

Tennyson's Muse took him in many directions, even to the far-lands of the English countryside, where if he had gripped faster reality he might have anticipated Mr Masfield.

His real kingdoms, however, are those that will remain ever dear to the romantic writer—the 'matter' of Britain, and the 'matter' of Greece and Rome. But his medievalism could never quite escape Alfred Tennyson, and so in his famous *Idylls of the King* we hear the voice of the Prince Consort rather than of King Arthur.

Tennyson's blank-verse is a masterly contribution to that most ambitious and exacting of mediums. The Muse soars and sings and is built into magnificent verse-paragraphs. How well he can fit it to the matter in hand is perhaps best seen in *The Lotus Eaters*.

Tennyson wrote in bulk. That which must eternally remain is certainly smaller in quantity than is generally understood, or which would be likely to have found agreement among the great Victorians.

*Quatrains from Omar Khayyam.*

## I

Awake ! for Morning in the Bowl of night  
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight :  
And Lo ! the Hunter of the East has caught  
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky  
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,  
"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup  
Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry "

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before  
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door !  
You know how little while we have to stay  
And once departed, may return no more."

## II

But come with old Khayyam, and leave the Lot  
Of Kaikobad and Kaikhosru forgot ,  
Let Rustum lay about him as he will,  
Or Hatim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown.  
That just divides the desert from the sown,  
Where name of Slave and Sultan scarce is known,  
And pity Sultan Mahmud on his Throne.



Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,  
 A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse and Thou  
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness  
 And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

## III

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai  
 Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,  
 How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp  
 Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.  
 They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
 The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep,  
 And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass  
 Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep,

I sometimes think that never blows so red  
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled,  
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears  
 Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green  
 Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—  
 Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows  
 From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

Oh, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears  
 To-day of past Regrets and future Fears  
*Tomorrow?*—Why, To-morrow I may be  
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

## IV

In the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,  
 I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay;  
 And with its all obliterated Tongue  
 It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, Pray!"

Ah, fill the Cup.—what boots it to repeat  
 How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:  
 Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday,  
 Why fret about them if To-day be sweet!

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,  
 One Moment of the Well of Life to taste  
 The Stars are setting and the Caravan  
 Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

## V

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!  
 That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!  
 The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,  
 Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire  
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  
 Would we not shatter it to bits—and then  
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

## EDWARD FITZGERALD

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,  
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again :  
How oft hereafter rising shall she look  
Through this same Garden after me—in vain !

## EDWARD FITZGERALD

Omar Khayyam, the astronomer-poet, was born at Naisapur in the province of Khorassan in the latter half of the eleventh century, and died within the first quarter of the twelfth. His fame as a scientist was as great as that of poet—which contains a moral the modern world could do well to note.

Fitzgerald's fame rests almost entirely upon his version of the Persian poet. This together with Richard Burton's *Kasidah of Haji Abdu El Yezdi*, remain the two most considerable contributions to orientalism in the mid nineteenth century.

It has been well said that Fitzgerald's version is "an inspired paraphrase rather than a translation." There are two transcripts of the poem, and it is difficult at places to know which to prefer, so they are usually published together side by side. The exquisite finish and polish of these quatrains, their perfect smoothness and epigrammatic finality constitute the main charm of Fitzgerald's work, and have endeared it to generations of readers.

There is something of Victorian theology intruding at times into the poem, despite the author's best effort not to detract from the frank paganism of his magic carpet. We get more than a hint in places that punishment is not far off for the liver, who would live too riotously, and in his own way Burton's *Kasidah* is much more uncompromising with Victorian Calvinistic theology. Richard Burton was never terrified with

visions of Heaven or of Hell To yourself be true is what Burton say  
through the mouth of his Hâji, true to your own precious individual man-  
hood that is *always* like none other's.

Better the myriad toils and pains that make the man  
to manhood true.

Thus be the rule that gurdeth life. these be the  
laws for me and you

With Ignorance wage eternal war, to know  
thyself for ever strain,

Thine ignorance of thine ignorance is thy  
fiercest foe, thy deadliest bane.

That blunts thy sense, and dulls thy taste -  
that deafs thine ears, and blinds thine eyes;

Creates the thing that never was, the Thing  
that ever is defies

Fitzgerald is not so robust But what a dish he sets before us! The  
artist in him "gave to English literature something that was new, beautiful,  
and permanent."

Mr. Laurence Houseman has shown us what Fitzgerald and Omar  
should mean to us, and it is well worth pondering

" . . . it would be difficult to name any single poem—long  
or short—written during the last hundred years which has taken hold of the  
thought of succeeding generations, not necessarily for agreement with its  
ethical content, but for recognition To a thesis which, without it, might  
have seemed soulless—materialism run to seed—it has given a dignity, a grace  
and a logical force which 'orthodoxy' must reckon with It is harder than  
it was formerly to damn a man theologically for believing that, in this life,  
life as we see it is the only true guide."

For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,

I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet clay.

And with its all obliterated Tongue

It murmur'd, 'Gently, Brother, gently, pray'

And has not such a story from of old  
Down Man's successive generations rolled  
Of such a clod of saturated Earth  
Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

"The argument is too humanly persuasive for our minds to escape from it. Without believing so much in the Potter—or pretending to know so much about Him as did the theologians of Geneva—here is a writer, a divine, who helps us to think better of Him, and to be sure—if He exists—that He is not so black as the theologians have painted him."

*The Last Ride Together*

I said—then dearest, since 'tis so,  
Since now at length my fate I know,  
Since nothing all my love avails,  
Since all my life seemed meant for, fails,

Since this was written and needs must be—  
My whole heart rises up to bless  
Your name in pride and thankfulness !  
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim  
Only a memory of the same,  
And this beside, if you will not blame,  
Your leave for one more last ride with me

My mistress bent that brow of hers ,  
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
When pity would be softening through,  
Fixed me a breathing while or two

With life or death in the balance right !  
The blood replenished me again ,  
My last thought was at least not vain ,  
I and my mistress, side by side  
Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
So, one day more am I deified.

Who knows but the world may end to-night ?

Hush ! if you saw some western cloud  
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed  
By many benedictions—sun's

And moon's and evening star's at once—  
 And so, you, looking and loving best,  
 Conscious grew, our passion drew  
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
 Down on you, near and yet more near,  
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here—  
 Thus leant she and lingered—joy and fear !  
 Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride ! My soul  
 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll  
 Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
 Past hopes already lay behind,  
 What need to strive with a life awry ?  
 Had I said that, had I done this,  
 So might I gain, so might I miss.  
 Might she have loved me ? just as well  
 She might have hated, who can tell !  
 Where had I been now if the worst befell ?  
 And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds ?  
 Why, all men strive, and who succeeds ?  
 We rode ; it seemed my spirit flew,  
 Saw other regions, cities new,  
 As the world rushed by on either side.  
 I thought,—all labor, yet no less  
 Bear up beneath their unsuccess

Look at the end of work, contrast  
 The petty done, the undone vast,  
 This present of theirs with the hopeful past !  
 I hoped she would love me ; here we ride

What hand and brain went ever paired ?  
 What heart alike conceived and dared ?  
 What act proved all its thought had been ?  
 What will but felt the fleshy screen ?

We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
 There's many a crown for who can reach  
 Ten lines, a statesman's life in each—  
 The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
 A soldier's a doing ! what atones ?  
 They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones,  
 My riding is better, by their leave

What does it all mean, poet ? Well,  
 Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
 What we felt only ; you expressed  
 You hold things beautiful the best,  
 And place them in rhyme so, side by side.  
 'Tis something, nay 'tis much : but then,  
 Have you yourself what's best for men ?  
 Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—  
 Nearer one whit your own sublime  
 Than we who never have turned a rhyme ?  
 Sing, riding's a joy ! For me, I ride



And you, great sculptor—so you gave  
 A score of years to Art, her slave,  
 And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
 To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
 What, man of music, you grown grey  
 With notes and nothing else to say,  
 Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
 "Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
 But in music we know how fashions end!"

I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate  
 Proposed bliss here should sublate  
 My being—had I signed the bond—  
 Still one must lead some life beyond,

Have a bliss to die with, dim-described  
 This foot once planted on the goal,  
 This glory-garland round my soul,  
 Could I descry such? Try and test!  
 I sink back shuddering from the quest,  
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?  
 Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoken so long!  
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned

Whither life's flower is first discerned,  
 We, fixed so, ever should so abide?  
 What if we still ride on, we two,  
 With life forever old yet new,  
 Changed not in kind but in degree,  
 The instant made eternity,—  
 And heaven just prove that I and she  
 Ride, ride together, forever ride

*One Word More*

There they are, my fifty men and women  
 Naming me the fifty poems finished!  
 Take them, Love, the book and me together;  
 Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also,  
*Rafael made a century of sonnets*  
 Made and wrote them in a certain volume  
 Dinted with the silverpointed pencil  
 Else he only used to draw *Madonnas*  
 These, the world might view—but one, the volume.  
 Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.  
 Did she live and love it all her lifetime?  
 Did she drop *his lady of the sonnets*,  
 Die, and let it drop beside her pillow  
 Where it lay in place of *Rafael's glory*,  
*Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving—*  
 Check, the world was wont to hail a painter's  
*Rafael's cheek*, her love had turned a poet's?

You and I would rather read that volume,  
 (Taken to his beating bosom—by it)  
 Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,  
 Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas

\* \* \* \* \*

Dante once prepared to paint an angel.  
 Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice"  
 While he mused and traced it and retraced it,  
 (Peradventure with a pen corroded)  
 Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,  
 When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the wicked,  
 Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,  
 Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,  
 Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,  
 Set the wretch go festering through Florence—  
 Dante, who loved because he hated,  
 Hated wickedness that hinders loving,  
 Dante standing, studying his angel,—  
 In there broke the folk of his Inferno

\* \* \* \* \*

You and I would rather see that angel,  
 Painted by the tenderness of Dante,  
 Would we not?—then read a fresh Inferno.  
 God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures  
 Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,  
 One to show a woman when he loves her!

ROBERT BROWNING

This I say of me, but think of you, Love !  
This to you—yourself my moon of poets !  
Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,  
Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you !  
There in turn I stand with them and praise you—  
Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it,  
But the best is when I glide from out them,  
Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,  
Come out on the other side, the novel  
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,  
Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,  
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,  
Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,  
Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom !

ROBERT BROWNING

In Victorian times Browning was considered to possess an intellect of outstanding worth. In today's judgement the value of that intellect has been diminished and a little dulled by time. Perhaps the least thing for which he will be remembered will be as a thinker. That, granted, much nevertheless remains which will ensure Robert Browning a high and permanent place in the English Pantheon.

His favourite medium of expression was the 'dramatic monologue,' which he might be said almost to have invented, or at least carried to a maturity never seen before. It became "a kind of thinking aloud wherein however it becomes the poet's ambition to investigate the whole province of the soul.

and the interplay of its reaction to the influence of environment. . . .” In this medium many will agree that *Andrea del Sarto* is his masterpiece.

The life-story of Robert Browning is also that of his wife Elizabeth Barrett. They change their country for one of adoption—Italy: Italy with all its luxuriant and brilliant beauty. Always they succeed in bringing this before us.

In almost everything Browning was Tennyson's opposite. Tennyson's clarity was opposed by Browning's wilful obscurity brought about by his constant experiment in style. If obscurity is Browning's chief fault, his lyric gift cannot be denied. He has given us some of the most exquisite lyrics in the language, as for instance—*A Woman's Last Word*, *A Light Woman*, and not a few more.

*Give Me The Splendid Silent Sun*

## I

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams  
full dazzling,

Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the  
orchard,

Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,

Give me an arbour, give me the trellis'd grape,

Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-  
moving animals teaching content,

Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus  
west of the Mississippi, and I looking up at the  
stars.

Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful  
flowers where I can walk undisturb'd

Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom  
I should never tire.

Give me perfect child, give me away aside from the  
noise of the world a rural domestic life,

Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by  
myself, for my ears only.

Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again  
O Nature your primal sanities!

These demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless  
excitement, and rack'd by the war-strife,)

These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries  
from my heart,

While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,  
 Day upon day and year upon year O city, walking  
     your streets,  
 Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing  
     to give me up.  
 Yet giving me to make glutt'd, enrich'd of soul,  
     you give me forever faces,  
 (O I see what I sought to escape, confronting,  
     reversing my cries  
 I see my own soul trampling down what I ask'd for.)

## II

Keep your splendid silent sun,  
 Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places  
     by the woods,  
 Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your  
     cornfields, and orchards,  
 Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the  
     Ninth-month bees hum;  
 Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms  
     incessant and endless along the *trottoirs*?\*  
 Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me  
     comrades and lovers by the thousand  
 Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new ones  
     by the hand every day I  
 Give me such shows—give me the streets of  
     Manhattan I

---

\*Pavements

Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching,—  
     give me the sound of trumpets and drums !  
 (The soldiers in companies of regiments—some  
     starting away, flushed and reckless.)  
 Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks,  
     young yet very old, worn, marching, noticing  
     nothing .  
 Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with  
     black-ships !  
 O such for me ! O an intense life, full to repletion  
     and varied !  
 The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me !  
 The saloon of the steamer ! the crowded excursion  
     for me ! the torch-light procession !  
 The dense brigade bound for war, with high piled  
     military waggon following ;  
 People, endless, streaming, with strong voices,  
     passions, pageants,  
 Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with  
     beating drums as now.  
 The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank  
     of muskets, (even the sight of the wounded,)  
 Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus !  
 Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me



## WALT WHITMAN

## WALT WHITMAN

A good many people still conjure before them the memory of Whitman's verse when they are wanting to stiffen up their ideas of free verse. In point of fact there is as considerable a gap between the peculiar technique developed and made his own by Whitman, as between traditional verse and *vers-libre*. The cadences of Whitman are elemental, ponderous, and sprawling, where, as a recent critic pointed out, the ego of "the poet passes over all the earth." They go back for their tradition to the Bible; only out of such a heritage could Whitman so sonorously and so cosmically have evolved his remarkable poetic style. Turn to the *Imagist* group of writers who have made *vers-libre* so peculiarly their own and the difference is at once apparent—"and like Agag modern free verse walks delicately." The inheritance is the Greek anthology, compressed concentrated beauty of Chinese and Japanese poetry, though the ground had been already prepared for them by Arnold, Whitman and Henley. Very different, too, was the aim of Whitman compared with that of the *vers-libre* practitioners. Today the sceptic and the cynic with the weapons of the realist holds up a mirror to this 'brave new world.' The poetry of Whitman "however unorthodox is ostentatiously religious." He takes the mission of the poet austere, as witness this *Song of Answer*.

All this time and at all times wait the words of true poems.

The words of poems do not merely please

The true poets are not followers of beauty but the august  
masters of beauty

But it is stronger in *Starting from Paumonok*

I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these States  
must be their religion.

Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur

"What Whitman says amounts to this that the man without faith of some kind, a religion of some kind, must sooner or later be aware of only a tragic futility. Whitman was widely read in spite of the seeming uncouthness, a kind of gnarled rusticity met with at times in his verse as one

with first-hand knowledge of the soil. Out of his reading grew his particular creed of idealism that contains such mixed influences as may be found in the writings of Hegel and the German philosophers, the influence of deism and the concept of nature in revolutionary and political and social thought. Above all perhaps was strongest in him the idealistic metaphysics of Emerson" Dr Ernest Rhys finally sums it all up thus.

" Ideas, for long the sole property of the philosophical coteries, and moving within the close range of academic influence, are here set humanly free in song, emotionally related to the common life of men "

*The World Beyond the Gates*

*How Prince Siddartha revolted against the sheltered life his father had imposed ; how twice he went forth and the consequences thereof.*

## I

Then one replied , " The city first, fair Prince !  
The temples, and the gardens, and the groves,  
And then the fields ; and afterwards fresh fields,  
With nullahs, maidans, jungle, koss on koss ,  
And next King Bimbasara's realm, and then  
The vast flat world, with crores on crores of folk."  
" Good," said Siddartha , " let the word be sent  
That Channa yoke my chariot—at noon  
To-morrow I shall ride and see beyond."

Whereof they told the King , " Our Lord, thy son  
Wills that his chariot be yoked at noon,  
That he may ride abroad and see mankind "

" Yea !" spake the careful King . " 'tis time he see ,  
But let the criers go about and bid  
My city deck itself, so there be met  
No noisome sight , and let none blind or maimed,  
None that is sick, or stricken deep in years,  
No leper, and no feeble folk come forth "

Therefore the stones were swept, and up and down  
The water-carriers sprinkled all the streets

From spitting skins, the housewives scattered fresh  
 Red powder on their thresholds, strung new wreaths,  
 And trimmed the tulsî-bush before their doors  
 The painting on the walls were heightened up  
 With liberal brush, the trees set thick with flags,  
 The idols gilded; in the four-went ways  
 Suryadeva and the great gods shone  
 'Mid shrines of leaves; so that the city seemed  
 A capital of some enchanted land  
 Also the criers passed, with drum and gong,  
 Proclaiming loudly, "Ho ! all citizens,  
 The King commands that there be seen to-day  
 No evil sight; let no one blind or maimed  
 None that is sick, or stricken deep in years,  
 No leper, and no feeble folk go forth  
 Let none, too, burn his dead nor bring them out  
 'Till nightfall Thus Suddhodana commands"

So all was comely and the houses trim  
 Throughout Kapilavastu, while the Prince  
 Came forth in painted car which two steers drew,  
 Snow-white, with swinging dewlaps, and huge humps  
 Wrinkles against the carved and lacquered yoke  
 Goodly it was to mark the people's joy  
 Greeting their Prince, and glad Siddhartha waxed  
 At sight of all those liege and friendly folk  
 Bright clad and laughing as if life were good  
 "Fair is the world," he said, "it likes me well !

And light and kind these men that are not kings,  
 And sweet my sisters here who toil and tend ;  
 What have I done for these to make them thus ?  
 Why, if I love them, should those children know ?  
 I pray take up yon pretty Sakya boy  
 Who flung us flowers, and let him ride with me,  
 How good it is to reign in realm like this !  
 How simple pleasure is, if these be pleased  
 Because I come abroad ! How many things  
 I need not if such little households hold  
 Enough to make our city full of smiles !  
 Drive, Channa ! through the gates, and let me see  
 More of this gracious world I have not known."

So passed they through the gates, a joyous crowd  
 Thronging about the wheels, whereof some ran  
 Before the oxen, throwing wreaths ; some stroked  
 Their silken flanks, some brought them rice and cakes,  
 All crying, " Jai ! Jai ! for our noble Prince ! "  
 Thus all the path was kept with gladsome looks  
 And filled with fair sights—for the king's word was  
 That such should be—when midway in the road,  
 Slow tottering from the hovel where he hid,  
 Crept forth a wretch in rags, haggard and foul,  
 An old, old man, whose shrivelled skin, sun-tanned,  
 Clung like a beast's hide to its fleshless bones.  
 Bent was his back with load of many days,  
 His eyepits red with rust of ancient tears,  
 His dim orbs bleary with rheum, his toothless jaws

Wagging with palsy and the fright to see  
 So many and such joy. One skinny hand  
 Clutched a worn staff to prop his quavering limbs,  
 And one was pressed upon the ridge of ribs  
 Whence came in gasps the heavy painful breath.  
 "Alms I" moaned he, "give, good people I for I die  
 To-morrow or the next day I" then the cough  
 Choked him, but still he stretched his palm, and stood  
 Blinking, and groaning 'mid his spasms, "Alms I"  
 Then those around had wrenched his feeble feet  
 Aside, and thrust him from the road again,  
 Saying, "The Prince I dost see? get to thy lair I"  
 But that Siddartha cried, "Let be I let be I  
 Channa I what thing is this who seems a man,  
 Yet surely only seems, being so bowed,  
 So miserable, so horrible, so sad?  
 Are men born sometimes thus? What meaneth he  
 Moaning to-morrow or next day I die?  
 Finds he no food that so his bones jut forth?  
 What woe hath happened to this piteous one?"  
 Then answer made the charoteer, "Sweet Prince I  
 This is no other than an aged man;  
 Some fourscore years ago his back was straight,  
 His eye bright, and his body goodly: now  
 The thievish years have sucked his sap away,  
 Pillaged his strength and filched his will and wit;  
 His lamp has lost oil, the wick burns black;  
 What life he keeps is one poor lingering spark  
 Which flickers for the finish; such is age;

Why should your Highness heed?" Then spake the  
Prince :

" But shall this come to others, or to all,  
Or is it rare that one should be as he ?"

" Most noble," answered Channa, " even as he,  
Will all these grow if they shall live so long."

" But," quoth the Prince, " if I shall live as long  
Shall I be thus ; and if Yasodhara  
Live fourscore years, is this old age for her,  
Jalmi, little Hasta, Gautami,

And Gunga, and the others ?" " Yea, great Sir !"  
The charioteer replied Then spake the Prince  
" Turn back, and drive me to my house again !  
I have seen that I did not think to see "

## II

For once again the spirit of the Prince  
Was moved to see this world beyond his gates,  
This life of man, so pleasant, if its waves  
Ran not to waste and woful finishing  
In Times, dry sands. " I pray you let me view  
Our city as it is," such was his prayer  
To King Suddhodana " Your Majesty  
In tender heed hath warned the folk before  
To put away ill things and common sights,  
And make their faces glad to gladden me,  
And all the causeways gay, yet have I learned  
This is not daily life, and if I stand  
Nearest, my father, to the realm and thee,

Fain would I know the people and the streets,  
 Their simple usual ways, and workday deeds,  
 And lives which those men live who are not kings.  
 Give me good leave, dear Lord ! to pass unknown  
 Beyond my happy gardens ; I shall come  
 The more contented to their peace again,  
 Or wiser, father, if not well content.  
 Therefore, I pray thee, let me go at will  
 To-morrow, with my servants, through the streets,"  
 And the King said, amidst his Ministers,  
 " Belike this second flight may mend the first.  
 Note how the falcon starts at every sight  
 New from his hood, but what a quiet eye  
 Cometh of freedom, let my son see all,  
 And bid them bring me tidings of his mind."

Thus on the morrow, when the noon was come,  
 The Prince and Channa passed beyond the gates,  
 Which opened to the signet of the King ;  
 Yet knew not they who rolled the great doors back  
 It was the King's son in that merchant's robe  
 And in the clerkly dress his charioteer.  
 Forth fared they by the common way afoot,  
 Mingling with all the Sakya citizens,  
 Seeing the glad and sad things of the town :  
 The painted streets alive with hum of noon,  
 The traders cross-legged 'mid their spice and grain.  
 The buyers with their money in the cloth,  
 The war of words to cheapen this or that,



The shout to clear the road, the huge stone wheels,  
 The strong slow oxen and their rustling loads,  
 The singing bearers with the palanquins,  
 The broad-necked hamals sweating in the sun,  
 The housewives bearing water from the well  
 With balanced chatties, and athwart their hips  
 The black-eyed babes ; the fly-swarmed sweetmeat  
shops,

The weaver at his loom, the cotton-bow  
 Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, the dogs  
 Prowling for orts, the skilful armourer  
 With tong and hammer linking shirts of mail,  
 The blacksmith with a mattock and a spear  
 Reddening together in his coals, the school  
 Where round their Guru, in a grave half-moon,  
 The Sakya children sang the mantras through,  
 And learned the greater and the lesser gods ,  
 The dyers stretching waistcloths in the sun  
 Wet from the vats—orange, and rose, and green ;  
 The soldiers clanking past with swords and shields,  
 The camel-drivers rocking on the humps,  
 The Brahman proud, the martial Kshatriya  
 The humble toiling Sudra ; here a throng  
 Gathered to watch some chattering snake-tamer  
 Wind round his wrist the living jewellery  
 Of asp and nag, or charm the hooded death  
 To angry dance with drone of beaded gourd ,  
 There a long line of drums and horns, which went,  
 With steeds gay painted and silk canopies,

To bring the bride home ; and here a wife  
 Stealing with cakes and garlands to the god  
 To pray her husband's safe return from trade,  
 Or beg a boy next birth ; hard by the booths  
 Where the swart potters beat the noisy brass  
 For lamps and lotas ; thence, by temple walls  
 And gateways, to the river and the bridge  
 Under the city walls

These had they passed  
 When from the roadside moaned a mournful voice,  
 " Help, masters I lift me to my feet ; oh, help !  
 Or I shall die before I reach my house ! "  
 A stricken wretch it was, whose quivering frame,  
 Caught by some deadly plague, lay in the dust  
 Writhing, with fiery purple blotches specked :  
 The chill sweat beaded on his brow, his mouth  
 Was dragged awry with twitchings of sore pain,  
 The wild eyes swam with quaking feeble limbs  
 And scream of terror, crying, " Ah, the pain !  
 Good people, help ! " whereon Siddhartha ran,  
 Lifted the woful man with tender hands,  
 With sweet looks laid the sick head on his knee,  
 And, while his soft touch comforted the wretch,  
 Asked, " Brother, what is ill with thee ? what harm  
 Hath fallen ? wherefore canst thou not arise ?  
 Why is it, Channa, that he pants and moans,  
 And gasps to speak, and sighs so pitiful ? "  
 Then spake the charioteer : " Great Prince ! this man  
 Is smitten with some pest ; his elements

Are all confounded, in his veins the blood,  
 Which ran a wholesome river, leaps and boils  
 A fiery flood, his heart, which kept good time,  
 Beats like an ill-played drum-skin, quick and slow ;  
 His sinews slacken like a bowstring slipped ;  
 The strength is gone from him, and a loin, and neck,  
 And all the grace and joy of manhood fled :  
 This is a sick man with the fit upon him.  
 See how he plucks and plucks to seize his grief,  
 And rolls his bloodshot orbs, and grinds his teeth,  
 And draws his breath as if 'twere choking smoke !  
 Lo ! now he would be dead , but shall not die  
 Until the plague hath had its work in him,  
 Killing the nerves which die before the life ;  
 Then, when his strings have cracked with agony  
 And all his bones are empty of the sense  
 To ache, the plague will quit and light elsewhere.  
 Oh, sir ! it is not good to hold him so !  
 The harm may pass, and strike thee, even thee."  
 But spake the Prince, still comforting the man,  
 " And are there others, are there many thus ?  
 Or might it be to me as now with him ?"  
 " Great Lord !" answered the charioteer, " This comes  
 In many forms to all men ; griefs and wounds,  
 Sickness and tetter, palsies, leprosies,  
 Hot fevers, watery wastings, issues, blains  
 Befall all flesh and enter everywhere."  
 " Come such ills unobserved ?" the Prince inquired.  
 And Channa said, " Like the sly snake they come

That stings unseen : like the striped murderer,  
 Who waits to spring from the Karunda bush,  
 Hiding beside the jungle path ; or like  
 The lightning, striking these and sparing those,  
 As chance may send "

" Then all men live in fear ?"  
 " So live they, Prince !"

" And none can say, I sleep  
 Happy and whole to-night, and so shall wake ?"  
 " None say it "

" And the end of many aches,  
 Which come unseen, and will come when they come,  
 Is this, a broken body and sad mind,  
 And so old age ?"

" Yea, if men last as long "  
 " But if they cannot bear their agonies,  
 Or if they will not bear, and seek a term .  
 Or if they bear, and be, as this man is,  
 Too weak except for groans, and so still live,  
 And growing old, grow older, then—what end ?"  
 " They die, Prince."

" Die ? "

" Yea, at the last comes Death,  
 In whatsoever way, whatever hour.  
 Some few grow old, most suffer and fall sick,  
 But all must die—behold, where comes the Dead !"

Then did Siddartha raise his eyes and see  
 Fast pacing towards the river-brink a band  
 Of wailing people, foremost one who swung  
 An earthen bowl with lighted coals ; behind  
 The kinsmen, shorn, with mourning marks, ungirt,  
 Crying aloud, " O Rama, Rama, hear !  
 Call upon Rama, brothers," next the bier,  
 Knit of four poles with bamboos interlaced.  
 Where on lay—stark and stiff, feet foremost, lean,  
 Chapfallen, sightless, hollow-flanked, a-grin.  
 Sprinkled with red and yellow dust—the Dead,  
 Whom at the four-went ways they turned head first,  
 And crying " Rama, Rama ! " carried on  
 To where a pile was reared beside the stream  
 Thereon they laid him, building fuel up—  
 Good sleep hath one that slumbers on that bed !  
 He shall not wake for cold, albeit he lies  
 Naked to all the airs—for soon they set  
 The red flames to the corners four, which crept  
 And licked, and flickered, finding out his flesh  
 And feeding on it with swift hissing tongues.  
 And crackle of parched skin, and snap of joint .  
 Till the fat smoke thinned and the ashes sank  
 Scarlet and grey, with here and there a bone  
 White midst the grey—the total of the man

Then spake the Prince . " Is this the end which comes  
 To all who live ? "

" This is the end that comes  
 To all," quoth Channa ; " he upon the pyre—

Whose remnants are so petty that the crows  
 Caw hungrily, then quit the fruitless feast—  
 Ate, drank, laughed, loved and lived and liked life well.  
 Then came—who knows?—some gust of jungle wind,  
 A stumble on the path, a taint in the tank,  
 A snake's nip, half a span of angry steel,  
 A chill, a fishbone, or a falling tile,  
 And life was over and the man is dead.  
 No appetites, no pleasures, and no pains  
 Hath such ; the kiss upon his lips is nought,  
 The fire-scorch nought, he smelleth not his flesh  
 A-roast, not yet the sandal and the spice  
 They burn ; the taste is emptied from his mouth,  
 The hearing of his ear is clogged, the sight  
 Is blinded in his eyes ; those whom he loved  
 Wail desolate, for even that must go,  
 The body which was lamp unto the life,  
 Or worms will have a horrid feast of it.  
 Here is the common destiny of flesh .  
 The high and low, the good and bad, must die,  
 And then, 'tis taught, begin anew and live  
 Somewhere, somehow—who knows?—and so again  
 The pangs the parting, and the lighted pile :—  
 Such is man's round."

(From *The Light of Asia*)

## EDWIN ARNOLD

Recently there has appeared a book from the pen of a famous French archaeological savant, Monsieur René Grousset, a notable book—*In the Footsteps of the Buddha*. To slight Buddhism at the expense of Brahmanism is rather to cut off one's left hand to spite one's right; both are equally needed if the story of the Indian cultural heritage is to be made plain with its complementary facets of art, religion, and philosophy.

If to-day the Buddhist period of Indian history has been revived by the keen and intensive activity of the modern experts, English, French, and German, the debt can never be forgotten to the man who first revealed to the world at large the beautiful and delicate humanism that lay behind the Buddhist faith.

Edwin Arnold should have a permanent niche in modern India's story, not only for his literary labours, but also because he gave his portion to the history of the educational system through his work, as Principal of the Deccan College, Poona, a college which has added to its prestige in recent times by the presence of Mr F. W. Bann, whose Sanskrit stories re-told in their English dress, remain exquisitely faithful to the spirit of their originals.

"*The Light of Asia*," was published in 1879, and immediately won immense popularity. As a writer of blank verse Arnold is not by any means in the front rank, it is too monotonous, the tempo scarcely ever varying from a dignified pedestrian step. It is not, therefore, to acclaim him as master in this medium that we include him here, but for the reason that no one so far has in the English tongue placed so sympathetic, and at times so vivid and charming a series of pictures illustrating the life of Buddha. Arnold knew the Indian countryside, so rich in its varied and charming colours, in its birds and animal life, and its changing seasons. Keen observation is frequently used, and in a few deft strokes we have the scene before us almost as to delight the heart of a Pre-Raphaelite painter.

The painted streets alive with hum of noon,  
The traders cross-legged 'mid their spice and grain.

Such passages as these are the fruit not of reading up your subject, but, of seeing, living, and observing it, as any writer worth his salt must do. Such passages help to make also Edwin Arnold, what has now been universally acknowledged—the one considerable Anglo-Indian poet of Victorian times—for Kipling belongs to the Edwardians if we wish.



*Shameful Death*

There were four of us about that bed ;  
The mass-priest knelt at the side,  
I and his mother stood at the head,  
Over his feet lay the bride .  
We were quite sure that he was dead,  
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,  
He did not die in the day,  
But in the morning twilight  
His spirit passed away,  
When neither sun nor moon was bright,  
And the trees were merely grey.

He was not slain with the sword,  
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,  
Yet spoke he never a word  
After he came in here ;  
I cut away the cord  
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,  
For the recreants came behind,  
In place where the hornbeams grow  
A path right hard to find,  
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,  
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,  
 When his arms were pinioned fast,  
 Sir John the knight of the Fen,  
 Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,  
 With knights threescore and ten.  
 Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,  
 And my hair is all turned grey.  
 But I met Sir John of the Fen  
 Long ago on a summer day,  
 And am glad to think of the moment when  
 I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,  
 And my strength is mostly passed,  
 But long ago I and my men,  
 When the sky was overcast,  
 And the smoke rolled over the reeds of the fen,  
 Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,  
 I pray you pray for Sir Hugh.  
 A good knight and a true,  
 And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

*The Haystack in the Floods*

Had she come all the way for this,  
To part at last without a kiss ?  
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
That her own eyes might see him slain  
Beside the haystack in the floods ?  
Along the dripping leafless woods,  
The stirrup touching either shoe,  
She rode astride as troopers do ;  
With kirtle kilted to her knee,  
To which the mud splashed wretchedly ,  
And the wet dripped from every tree  
Upon her head and heavy hair,  
And on her eyelids broad and fair :  
The tears and rain ran down her face.

By fits and starts they rode apace  
And very often was his place  
Far off from her ; he had to ride  
Ahead, to see what might betide  
When the roads crossed ; and sometimes, when  
There rose a murmuring from his men,  
Had to turn back with promises ;  
Ah me ! she had but little ease ,  
And often for pure doubt and dread  
She sobbed, made giddy in the head  
By the swift riding , while, for cold  
Her slender fingers scarce could hold  
The wet reins , yea, and scarcely, too,

She felt the foot within her shoe  
 Against the stirrup ; all for this,  
 To part at last without a kiss  
 Beside the haystack in the floods

For when they neared that old soaked hay  
 They saw across the only way  
 That Judas, Godmar, and the three  
 Red running lions distantly  
 Grinned from his pennon, under which,  
 In one straight line along the ditch,  
 They counted thirty heads.

So then,

While Robert turned round to his men,  
 She saw at once the wretched end.  
 And, stooping down, tried hard to rend  
 Her coil the wrong way from her head.  
 And hid her eyes ; while Robert said :  
 " Nay, love, 'Tis scarcely two to one,  
 At Poitiers where we made them run  
 So fast—why, sweet my love, good cheer  
 The Gascon frontier is so near,  
 Nought after this "

" But, O ? " she said,

" My God I my God I I have to tread  
 The long way back without you ; then  
 The court at Paris ; those six men ;  
 The gratings of the Chatelet ;  
 The swift Seine on some rainy day

Like this, and people standing by,  
 And laughing, while my weak hands try  
 To recollect how strong men swim  
 All this, or else a life with him,  
 For which I should be damned at last,  
 Would God that this next hour were past !"

He answered not, but cried his cry,  
 " St. George for Marny !" cheerily ;  
 And laid his hand upon her rein.  
 Alas ! no man of all his train  
 Gave back that cheery cry again ;  
 And, while for rage his thumb beat fast  
 Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast  
 About his neck a kerchief long,  
 And bound him

Then they went along  
 To Godmar ; who said : " Now, Jehane  
 Your lover's life is on the wane  
 So fast, that, if this very hour  
 You yield not as my paramour,  
 He will not see the rain leave off—  
 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,  
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
 She thought her forehead bled, and—" No "

She felt the foot within her shoe  
 Against the stirrup ; all for this,  
 To part at last without a kiss  
 Beside the haystack in the floods

For when they neared that old soaked hay  
 They saw across the only way  
 That Judas, Godmar, and the three  
 Red running lions dimly  
 Grinned from his pennon, under which,  
 In one straight line along the ditch,  
 They counted thirty heads.

So then,

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 She saw at once the wretched end,  
 And, stooping down, tried hard to rend  
 Her coil the wrong way from her head  
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 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,  
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now.”

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
 She thought her forehead bled, and—“ No ”

She said, and turned her head away,  
 As there were nothing else to say,  
 And everything were settled : red  
 Grew Godmar's face from chin to head :  
 " Jehane, on yonder hill there stands  
 My castle, guarding well my lands .  
 What hinders me from taking you,  
 And doing that I list to do  
 To your fair wilful body, while  
 Your knight lies dead ? "

A wicked smile  
 Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,  
 A long way out she thrust her chin :  
 " You know that I should strangle you  
 While you were sleeping ; or bite through  
 Your throat, by God's help—as I " she said,  
 " Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid !  
 For in such wise they hem me in,  
 I cannot choose but sin and sin,  
 Whatever happens ; yet I think  
 They could not make me eat or drink,  
 And so should I just reach my rest. "

" Nay if you do not my behest,  
 O Jehane ! though I love you well,  
 Said Godmar, " would I fail to tell  
 All that I know, " " Foul lies, " she said,  
 " Eh ? lies my Jehane ? by God's head,  
 At Paris folks would deem them true !



Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,  
 'Jehane the brown ! Jehane the brown !  
 Give us Jehane to burn or drown !'—  
 Eh—gag me, Robert !—my friend,  
 This were indeed a piteous end  
 For those long fingers, and long feet  
 And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet,  
 An end that few men would forget  
 That saw it—So, an hour yet :  
 Consider, Jehane, which to take  
 Of life or death !"

So, scarce awake,

Dismounting, did she leave that place,  
 And totter some yards, with her face  
 Turned upward to the sky she lay,  
 Her head on a wet heap of hay  
 And fell asleep : and while she slept,  
 And did dream, the minutes crept  
 Round to the twelve again ; but she  
 Being waked at last, sighed quietly,  
 And strangely childlike came, and said :  
 " I will not," Straightway Godmar's head,  
 As though it hung on strong wires, turned  
 Most sharply round, and his face burned,  
 For Robert—both his eyes were dry,  
 He could not weep, but gloomily  
 He seemed to watch the rain ; yea, too,  
 His lips were firm ; he tried once more

*In the Orchard**(Provençal Burden)*

Leave go my hands, let me catch breath and see ;  
Let the dew-fall drench either side of me ;

Clear apple-leaves are soft upon that moon  
Seen sidelong like a blossom in the tree ;  
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon

The grass is thick and cool, it lets us lie  
Kissed upon either cheek and either eye,  
I turn to thee as some green afternoon  
Turns toward sunset, and is loth to die ;  
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon

Lie closer, lean your face upon my side,  
Feel where the dew fell that has hardly dried,  
Hear how the blood beats that went nigh to swoon ;  
The pleasure lives there when the sense has died ;  
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

O my fair lord, I charge you leave me thus ;  
Is it not sweeter than a foolish kiss ?  
Nay take it then, my flower, my first in June,  
My rose, so like a tender mouth it is .  
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

Love, till dawn sunder night from day with fire,  
Dividing my delight and my desire,  
The crescent life and love the plenilune,

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Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

Love, till dawn sunder night from day with fire  
Dividing my delight and my desire,  
The crescent life and love the plenilune,

Love me though dusk begin and dark retire ;  
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon

Ah, my heart lails, my blood draws back ; I know,  
 When life runs over, life is near to go ;  
 And with the slain of love love's ways are strewn,  
 And with their blood, if love will have it so ;  
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

Ah, do thy will now , slay me if thou wilt ;  
 There is no building now the walls are built,  
 No quarrying now the corner stone is hewn,  
 No drinking now the vine's whole blood is split ;  
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

Nay, slay me now , nay, for I will be slain ;  
 Pluck thy red pleasure from the teeth of pain,  
 Break down thy vine ere yet grape-gatherers prune,  
 Slay me ere day can slay desire again ;  
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon

Yea, with thy sweet lips with thy sweet sword ; yea,  
 Take life and all, for I will die, I say ,  
 Love, I gave love, is life a better boon ?  
 For sweet night's sake I will not live till day ;  
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

Nay, I will sleep then only , nay, but go  
 Ah sweet, too sweet to me, my sweet, I know  
 Love, sleep, and death go to the sweet same tune ;

Hold my hair fast, and kiss me through it so.  
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon.

*Choruses from "Atalanta"*

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces  
The mother of months in meadow or plain  
Fills the shadows and windy places  
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain,  
And the brown bright nightingale amorous  
Is half assuaged for Itylus.  
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,  
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain

Come with bows bent, and with emptying of quivers,  
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,  
With a noise of winds and many rivers,  
With a clamour of waters, and with might,  
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,  
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet;  
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,  
Round the feet of the day, and the foot of the night,

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,  
Fold our hands round our knees, and cling?  
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,  
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!  
For the stars and the winds are unto her  
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player,

For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her  
 And the south-west wind and the west wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
 And all the season of snows and sins ;  
 The days dividing lover and lover,  
 The light that loses, the night that wins ,  
 And time remembered is grief forgotten,  
 And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
 And in grown underwood and cover  
 Blossom by blossom the spring begins,

The full streams feed on flowers of rushes,  
 Ripe grasses, trammel a travelling foot,  
 The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes  
 From leaf to flower and flower to fruit ;  
 And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,  
 And the oat is heard above the lyre,  
 And the hooped heel of a satyr crushes  
 The chestnut husk at the chestnut-root

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,  
 Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,  
 Follows with dancing and fills with delight  
 The Maenad and the Bassarid ;  
 And soft as lips that laugh and hide  
 The laughing leaves of the trees divide,  
 And screen from seeing and leave in sight  
 The god pursued, the maiden hid

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair  
 Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes ;  
 The wild vine slipping down leaves bare  
 Her bright breast shortening into sighs ;  
 The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,  
 But the berried ivy catches and cleaves  
 To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare  
 The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Before the beginning of years,  
 There came to the making of man  
 Time, with a gift of tears ,  
 Grief, with a glass that ran  
 Pleasure, with pain for leaven ,  
 Summer, with flowers that fell ,  
 Remembrance, fallen from heaven ,  
 And madness, risen from hell .  
 Strength, without hands to smite ;  
 Love, that endures for a breath ;  
 Night, the shadow of light ,  
 And life the shadow of death

And the high gods took in hand  
 Fire, and the falling of tears,  
 And a measure of sliding sand  
 From under the feet of the years ,  
 And forth and drift of the sea ;  
 And dust of the labouring earth ;

And bodies of things to be  
     In the houses of death and of birth ;  
 And wrought with weeping and laughter,  
     And fashioned with loathing and love,  
 With life before and after,  
     And death beneath and above,  
 For a day and a night and a morrow,  
     That his strength might endure for a span,  
 With travail and heavy sorrow,  
     The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south  
     They gathered as unto strife ;  
 They breathed upon his mouth,  
     They filled his body with life ,  
 Eye-sight and speech they wrought  
     For the veils of the soul therein,  
 A time for labour and thought  
     A time to serve and to sin ,  
 They gave him light in his ways,  
     And love, and a space for delight,  
 And beauty and length of days,  
     And night, and sleep in the night,  
 His speech is a burning fire ,  
     With his lips he travaileth ;  
 In his heart is a blind desire  
     In his eyes foreknowledge of death ;  
 He weaves, and is clothed with dension ,  
     Sows, and he shall not reap ;



His life is a watch or a vision  
Between a sleep and a sleep.

## ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

"The music of a peer," is how Professor Quiller-Couch has apostrophized the poetry of Swinburne. After Shelley it is scarcely too much to say he has the most supreme gift of singing in the whole range of English poetry. Our same authority has told us in a graphic page "how the young poet took the worlds of Oxford and Cambridge by storm; how, hand in hand the youth of the time went down the streets chanting his gorgeous refrains and extolling his rhymes, with every gesture of frenzied enjoyment, for a new instrument had been discovered in the English speech, and all were amazed and must testify to their delicious enjoyment."

Swinburne is a romantic as genuine as Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It has been well said that he 'prolonged an impulse,' for he continued the generation of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Landor. "His one constant theme is the exultation of freedom—with Italy substituted for Byron's Hellas. Swinburne looks back to Greece and its pantheism, and to the Middle Ages for its love of sensuous beauty."

Chief of all, Swinburne will be remembered for his lyric genius. He was not a thinker, nor was his genius dramatic. Like Byron he came of naval ancestry. It is not surprising, therefore, that his favourite theme was "the sea, the joy of effort, the glory of life and the universality of death, the procession of the seasons, the power and the fragility of love . . . . ."

The two poems we have selected you will find of his very finest expression.

*The Woodlark*

*Teevo cheevo cheevia chee .*

O where, what can that be?

*Weedio-weedio : there again !*

So tiny a trickle of song-strain ;

And all round not to be found

For brier, bough, furrow, or green ground

Before or behind or far or at hand

Either left either right

Anywhere in the sunlight.

Well, after all I ah but hark —

'I am the little woodlark.'

To-day the sky is two and two

With white strokes and strains of the blue

Round a ring, around a ring

And while I sail (must listen) I sing

The skylark is my cousin and he

Is known to man more than me

    . . . when the cry within  
Says Go on then I go on

Till the longing is less and the good gone

But down drop, if it says Stop,  
 To the all-a-leaf of the treetop  
 And after that off the bough

I am so very, O so very glad  
 That I do think there is not to be had

The blue wheat-acre is underneath  
 And the braided ear breaks out of the sheath,  
 The ear in milk, lush the sash,  
*And crush-silk poppies aflash,*  
 The blood-gush blade-gash  
 Flame-rash rudred  
 Bud shelling or broad-shed  
 Tatter-tassel-tangled and dingle-a-dangled  
 Dandy-hung dainty head

And down.. the furrow dry  
 Sunspurge and oxeye  
 And lace-leaved lovely  
 Foam-tuft fumitory\*

\* A plant whose appearance belies its smell

Through the velvety wind V-winged  
 To the nest's nook I balance and buoy  
 With a sweet joy of a sweet joy,  
 Sweet, of a sweet, of a sweet joy,  
 Of a sweet—a sweet—sweet—joy.

## GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

There is much talk of this poet today, and his influence on the modernists is supposed to be, in the matter of prosody particularly, the most considerable of any; he is even considered as a modern, although actually his poetry follows that of the Pre-Raphaelites. In the matter of prosody Hopkins was an eccentric, so much so that his friend, the late Poet-Laureate Robert Bridges, kept his manuscripts unpublished until 1918. Mr. Megroz gives us an interesting account of his daring technical innovations as follows:

"He is a bold technical innovator, evolving a style that is a wonderful amalgam of idiomatic speech and sudden archaisms and coinages, while the essentially simple and forcible rhythm is often puzzling to the eye rather than to the ear because it runs over line-ends and stanzas much more frequently and with a far swifter movement than is common to classical English poetry since the early Elizabethans. bewilderment soon gives place to pleasure, for the excitement is not alone that of novelty or simply of strong rhythm, though when the ear has caught his *Sprung* Rhythm it excites the mind as effectively as Swinburne's metrical feats. . . Hopkins' idea of sprung rhythm was a counterpoint rhythm so maintained that the original measure cannot assert itself. . ."

Hopkins' theories, as again Mr Megroz tells us, have been taken up and developed most successfully by modern poets. One and all took up the natural speech rhythm so much stressed by Hopkins, and we shall find it in the work of Ezra Pound, Sacheverell Sitwell, and, of course, recently, more emphatically than ever, in the work of Mr. Auden and Mr. Day Lewis. The relation of Hopkins' sprung rhythm to *vers-libre* must be obvious when we know that sprung rhythm renders the discarding of rhyme, stanza, and other prosodic resources of poetry quite an unnecessary means to freshness of expression. There cannot be any doubt that the influence of Hopkins' *Poems* "will reach far in the coming English poetry, and it will provide a rich alternative for those poets who do not find the adapted Latin measures satisfying."

Mr Day Lewis gives so clear an idea of this sprung rhythm of Hopkins that I cannot refrain quoting him however briefly:

"It is based on one syllable stressed in each foot: this syllable may stand alone in its foot or it may be accompanied by a number of unstressed syllables, usually not more than four. . . . thus in his meters the stress is the foundation, whereas in English verse as a whole, quantity—i.e., two or three syllables to a foot—is the foundation. And since stress is the basis of common speech rhythm, we may say that this sprung rhythm approximates to the rhythm of common speech."

All of which, however, will convey very little to you unless you are persuaded to make further contact with this fascinating poet for yourselves, and particularly with *The Wreck Of the Deutschland* where "the two extremes of his peculiar style may be seen at work—the prosaic and the intensely poetic." Mr Megroz would have it that "this poem in spite of its intricacies and metaphysical background stands or falls as an elegy, and by virtue of its sustained emotion and sometimes perfectly marvellous music must rank with the greatest English poems of its kind, with *Lycidas*, *Adonais*, and *Thyrsis*." The interested student should carefully compare Hopkins' *The Woodlark* with Shelley's *The Skylark*, and try to determine the differences in aim and effects.

*The Voice of Nature*

I stand on the cliff and watch the veiled sun paling  
A silver field afar in the mournful sea,  
The scourge of the surf, and plaintive gulls sailing  
At ease on the gale that smites the shuddering lea ;  
Whose smile severe and chaste  
June never hath stirred to vanity, nor age defaced,  
In lofty thought strive, O spirit, for ever :  
In courage and strength pursue thine own endeavour.

Ah I if it were only for thee, thou restless ocean  
Of waves that follow and roar, the sweep of the tides  
Wer't only for thee, impetuous wind, whose motion  
Precipitate all o'errides, and turns, nor abides ;  
For you sad birds and fair,  
Or only for thee, bleak cliff, erect in the air ;  
Then well could I read wisdom in every feature,  
O well should I understand the voice of Nature

But, far away, I think in the Thames valley,  
The silent river glides by flowery banks :  
And birds sing sweetly in branches that arch an alley  
Of cloistered trees, moss-grown in their ancient ranks :  
Where if a light air stray,  
'Tis laden with hum of bees and scent of May,  
Love and peace be thine, O Spirit, for ever :  
Serve thy sweet desire ; despise endeavour.

ROBERT BRIDGES

And if it were only for thee, entranced river,  
That scarce dost rock the lily on her airy stem,  
Or stir a wave to murmur, or a rush to quiver ;  
Wer't but for the woods, and summer asleep in them :  
For you my bowers green,  
My hedges of rose and woodbine, with walks between,  
Then well could I read wisdom in every fature,  
O well should I understand the voice of Nature

ROBERT BRIDGES.

Sir Hugh Walpole recently in an appreciation of Bridges paid a tribute that was fitting and timely " He really did write some of the most beautiful poetry in the English language, and I say that with emphasis because I have found that in the present fashion of the most modern poetry he is neglected and unread."

That is a correct view which I am sure few if any will deny. It is correct I am sure because that poetry which has a body of tradition behind it can with impunity brave the test of time. A moment only with the poetry of Bridges declares his muse to be concerned with the pursuit of beauty and of feeling. This alone might almost suffice to make him unpopular with the moderns since such manifestations are regarded as derelictions of duty to the twentieth century compromise. Smartness and cleverness command attention rather than "the still sad music of humanity"

Again, Bridges chose to express his muse in unbroken continuity with the best that lies within the lyric English tradition, that inheritance understood by him as by very few, an inheritance that strings together such a

galaxy of genius as we associate with the names of Shakespeare, Herrick, Marvell, Burns, and today Belloc, Housman, de la Mare, and Yeats

The poem we have here should be compared with the mood and muse of Wordsworth and the Elizabethans; search and you will discover echoes of both. Izaak Walton would not have been only shy of such lines as these—

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook  
 Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree  
 Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book  
 Forgetting soon his pride of fishery

Few poets have so apprehended the loveliness of the English scene as has Robert Bridges, or expressed in language so lyrically perfect



*The Royal Tombs of Golconda*

I MUSE among these silent lanes  
Whose spacious darkness guards your dust .  
Around me sleep the hoary plains  
That hold your ancient wards in trust ;  
I pause, my dreaming spirit hears,  
Across the wind's unquiet tides,  
The glimmering music of your spears,  
The laughter of your royal brides

In vain, O kings, doth time aspire  
To make your names oblivion's sport,  
While yonder hill wears like a tiara  
The ruined grandeur of your fort.  
Though centuries falter and decline,  
Your proven strongholds shall remain  
Embodied memories of your line,  
Incarnate legends of your reign.

O Queens, in vain old Fate decreed  
Your flower-like bodies to the tomb :  
Death is in truth the vital seed  
Of your impenshable bloom  
Each new-born year the bulbuls sing  
Their songs of your renascent loves ,  
Your beauty wakens with the spring  
To kindle these pomegranate groves.

## MRS SAROJINI NAIDU

The poetry of Sarojini Naidu offers in many respects an immense contrast to her brother poet of Bengal Mrs Naidu is a member of a family noted for varied accomplishment and descended from a dynasty long the patrons of culture. Her South Indian heritage she keeps much more in abeyance than is the case with the Bengali heritage of Tagore. Perhaps critics on the whole are chiefly concerned with the absence in her poetry of real philosophical foundation, but there can be no question of her powers to exhibit a marvellous artistry in words which she handles with all the sense of pattern and form of the true designer enriched and embellished by the craft of the jeweller. At times she seems to come nearer to the French romantics, to the Parnassians, to Gautier, to Heredia, and more recently, perhaps, to Albert Samain, with their glowing harmonious word-texture. But she learnt a good deal of her craft in England through contact with some of the well-known figures of the "nineties" more particularly, Arthur Symonds and Edmund Gosse, the latter being her sponsor to the English-reading public in the early years of this century. She handles her favourite instrument, the lyric, with the skill of a most intensely accomplished bilingual adept—where the singing quality is never at a loss and the command of jewelled metaphor and phrase never lags. Some of her verses have been set to music long ago by Coleridge Taylor, the composer who startled the world with his famous choral work *Hiawatha*. Latterly Sarojini Naidu has deserted the Muse to participate in the development of India's struggle for modern political consciousness. She is as accomplished a speaker as she is a poetess, and "the inspiration and the verve of the Nighungale of India never seems to flag, whether it seeks expression in tracks of oratory or the greater discipline of more formal numbers."

*A Foretelling of the Child's Husband*

But on a day whereof I think,  
One shall dip his hand to drink  
In that still water of thy soul,  
And its imaged tremors race  
Over thy joy-troubled face,  
As the interolved reflections roll  
From a shaken fountain's brink,  
With swift light wrinkling its alcove.  
From the hovering wing of Love

The warm stain shall flit roseal on thy cheek,  
Then, sweet blushet I when as he,  
The destined paramount of thy universe,  
Who has no worlds to sigh for, ruling thee,  
Ascends his vermeil throne of empery,  
One grace alone I seek.

Oh I may this treasure-galleon of my verse,  
Fraught with its golden passion, oared with cadent  
rhyme,

Set with a towering press of fantasies,  
Drop safely down the time,  
Leaving mine isled self behind it far,

Soon to be sunken in the abyss of seas,  
(As down the years the splendour voyages  
From some long ruined and night-submerged star),  
And in thy subject sovereign's havening heart  
Anchor the freightage of its virgin ore ;  
Adding its wasteful more

To his own overflowing treasury,  
 So through his river mine shall reach thy sea,  
     Bearing its confluent part ;  
     In his pulse mine shall thrill ;  
 And the quick heart shall quicken from the heart  
     That's still

*Now pass your ways, fair bird, and pass your ways,  
     If you will ;  
     I have you through the days,  
     And fit or hold you still,  
     And perch you where you list  
         On what wrist,—  
     You are mine through the times,  
 I have caught you fast for ever in a tangle of sweet rhymes,  
     And in your young maiden morn,  
     You may scorn,  
     But you must be  
     Bound and sociate to me ;  
 With this thread from out the tomb my dead hand shall  
     tether thee !*

*Daisy*

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown  
     Six foot out of the turf,  
 And the harebell shakes on the windy hill  
     O the breath of the distant surf !—

The hills look over on the South,  
 And southward dreams the sea ;  
 And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,  
 Came innocence and she,

Where 'mid the grose and raspberry  
 Red for the gatherer springs,  
 Two children did we stray and talk  
 Wise, idle, childish things.

She listen'd with big lipp'd surprise,  
 Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine  
 Her skin was like a grape, whose veins  
 Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,  
 Nor knew her own sweet way ,  
 But there's never a bird so sweet a song  
 Throng'd in whose throat that day

O, there were flowers in Storrington  
 On the turf and on the spray ;  
 But the sweeter flower on Sussex hills  
 Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smooth'd earth's furrow'd face !  
 She gave me tokens three —  
 A look, a word of her winsome mouth,  
 And a wild raspberry

A berry red, a guileless look,  
 A still word,—strings of sand !  
 And yet they made my wild, wild heart  
 Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,  
 And candid as the skies,  
 She took the berries with her hand  
 And the love with her sweet eyes,

The fairest things have fleetest end ;  
 Their scent survives their close ;  
 But the rose's scent is bitterness  
 To him that loved the rose !

She looked a little wistfully,  
 Then went her sunshine way —  
 The sea's eye had a mist on it,  
 And the leaves fell from the day

She went, her unremembering way.  
 She went, and left in me  
 The pang of all the partings gone  
 And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul  
 Was sad that she was glad ;  
 At the sadness in the sweet,  
 The sweetness in the sad

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Still, still I seem'd to see her, still  
Look up with soft replies,  
And take the berries with her hand,  
And love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,  
That is not paid with moan ;  
For we are born in other's pain,  
And perish in our own

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Francis Thompson belongs to the poetry of mysticism, and to find poets reminding us of him we must look back to the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century. As a poet he is most famous for his *Hound of Heaven*—a poem in which was expressed once and for all the experience of what in religious language used to be called a "converted soul." It is in this poem that the quality of seventeenth century mysticism is at its strongest. But it is not in this class of poetry that we have chosen to represent Thompson, but rather for his *Poems on Children*. These are a beautiful series of poems in which we hear the authentic spirit of Wordsworth himself.

She went, her unremembering way,  
She went, and left in me  
The pang of all the partings gone  
And partings yet to be

We have chosen two poems from the poems on children. The *Daisy* is one of the most beautiful of all these poems, and was, as far as we know, most likely written for the child of Thompson's friend and benefactor, Wilfred Meynell, the Catholic publisher. As we saw above, Wordsworth's *Lucy*

# FRANCIS THOMPSON

poems immediately occur to one's mind. What is very interesting in this poem is how the impersonality of ballad poetry has been converted, along with the form, to a highly personalized expression. We get such fine echoes as this:

O, there were flowers in Storrington  
On the turf and on the apray;  
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills  
Was the Daisy-flower that day!

A beautifully poignant touch is here:

A berry red, a guileless look,  
A still word,—strings of sand  
And yet they made my wild, wild heart  
Fly down to her little hand

What a beautiful and singularly apt conceit have we not in

She looked a little wistfully  
Then went her sunshine way—  
The sea's eye had a mist on it,  
And the leaves fell from the day

Thompson handles his lyrical instrument with a consummate touch. The one poem which ranks him with the mystics is that most blazing of all his inspirations—*The Hound of Heaven*

His life was one of the most pathetic of all poets. According to the legend, and not very far from fact either, Thompson was reduced to selling matches in the London streets. Privation and exposure to a difficult climate brought on a decline, the fatal termination of which was only for the time postponed by the intervention of the Meynell family.



*Alma Mater*

Know you her secret none can utter?  
Hers of the Book, the tripled crown?  
Still on the spire the pigeons flutter;  
Still by the gateway haunts the gown;  
Still on the street from corbel and gutter,  
Faces of stone look down.

Faces of stone, and other faces—  
Some from library windows wan  
Forth on her gardens, her green spaces,  
Peer and turn to their books anon  
Hence, my Muse, from the green oases  
Gather the tent, begone!

Nay, should she by the pavement linger  
Under the rooms where once she play'd.  
Who from the feast would rise and fling her  
One poor sou for her serenade?  
One poor laugh for the antic finger  
Thrumming a lute-string fray'd?

Once, my dear,—but the world was young, then—  
Magdalen elms and Trinity limes—  
Lissom the blades and the backs that swung then,  
Eight good men in the good old times—  
Careless we, and the chorus flung then  
Under St. Mary's chimes!

Reins lay loose and the ways led random—  
 Christ Church meadow and Iffley track—  
 'Idleness horrid and dogcart' tandem—  
 Aylesbury grind and Bicester pack—  
 Pleasant our lines, and faith! we scann'd 'em;  
 Having that artless knack.

Come, old limner, the times grow colder;  
 Leaves of the creeper redden and fall.  
 Was it a hand that clapp'd my shoulder?  
 Only the wind by the chapel wall.  
 Dead leaves drift on the lute: so....fold her  
 Under the faded shawl

Never we wince, though none deplore us,  
 We, who go reaping that we sow'd,  
 Cities at cock-crow wake before us—  
 Hey, for the lilt of the London road!  
 One look back and a rousing chorus!  
 Never a palinode!

Still on her spire the pigeons hover;  
 Still by her gateway hauots the gown.  
 Ah, but her secret? You, young lover,  
 Drumming her old ones forth from town,  
 Know you the secret none discover?  
 Tell it—when you go down.

## A. QUILLER-COUCH

Yet if at length you seek her, prive her,  
Lean to her whispers never so nigh ;  
Yet if at last not less her lover  
You in your hansom leave the High ,  
Down from her towers a ray shall hover,  
Touch you—a passer-by !

## SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch holds the chair of English Literature in the University of Cambridge. He has made fame rather in the realm of fiction than in Literature or poetry, but he has endeared himself to generations of Oxford men for his charming poem that we give here, that holds qualities with the best English lyric tradition, a Muse that when the poet wills he can mould in beauty that reminds us at its best perhaps of all poets today of Mr. Hilaire Belloc with its strong feeling for nature and out-door life.

*Oxford*

Over, the four long years ! And now there rings  
One voice of freedom and regret ; Farewell !  
Now old remembrance sorrows, and now sings ;  
But songs from sorrow, now, I cannot tell

City of weather'd cloister and worn court ;  
Grey city of strong towers and clustering spires ;  
Where art's fresh loveliness would first resort ;  
Where lingering art kindled her latest fires !

Where on all hands, wondrous with ancient grace,  
Grace touch'd with age, rise works of goodliest men ,  
Next Wykeham's art obtain their splendid place  
The zeal of Inigo, the strength of Wren.

Where at each coign of every antique street,  
A memory hath taken root in stone ;  
There, Raleigh shone ; there, toil'd Franciscan feet ;  
There, Johnson flinch'd not, but endured alone ;

There, Shelley dream'd his white Platonic dreams ;  
There, classic Landor throve on Roman thought ;  
There, Addison pursued his quiet themes,  
There, smiled Erasmus, and there, Colet taught

And there, O memory more sweet than all !  
Lived he, whose eyes keep yet our passing light ;  
Whose crystal lips Athenian speech recall ,  
Who wears Rome's purple with least pride, most right.\*

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\* Cardinal Newman

That is the Oxford strong to charm us yet ;  
 Eternal in her beauty and her past.  
 What, though her soul be vex'd ? She can forget  
 Cares of an hour ; only the great things last.

Only the gracious air, only the charm,  
 And ancient might of true humanities,  
 These nor assault of man, nor time, can harm ;  
 Not these, nor Oxford with her memories.

Together have we walk'd with willing feet  
 Gardens of plenteous trees, bowering soft lawn  
 Hills whither Arnold wander'd . all sweet  
 June meadows from the troubling world withdrawn ;

Chapels of cedarn fragrance, and rich gloom  
 Pour'd from empurpled panes on either hand ;  
 Cool pavements, carved with legends of the tomb ;  
 Grave haunts, where we might dream, and understand

Over, the four long years I and unknown powers  
 Call to us, going forth upon our way ;  
 Ah ! Turn we, and look back upon the towers  
 That rose above our lives, and cheer'd the day

Proud and serene, against the sky they gleam ,  
 Proud and secure, upon the earth they stand,  
 Our city hath the air of a pure dream,  
 And here indeed is a Hesperian land

LIONEL JOHNSON

Think of her so ! The wonderful, the fair,  
The immemorial, and the ever young ;  
The city sweet with our forefathers' care ;  
The city where the Muses all have sung.

Ill times may be ; she hath no thought of time ;  
She reigns beside the waters yet in pride.  
Rude voices cry ; but in her ears the chime  
Of full sad bells brings back her old springtide.

Like to a queen in pride of place, she wears  
The splendour of a crown in Radcliffe's dome,  
Well fare she well ! As Perfect beauty fares,  
And those high places that are beauty's home

LIONEL JOHNSON

This poem, and that of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, who though a Cambridge professor is a son of Oxford, form a tribute that those who know "the triple-crown" will understand and cherish

Perhaps, at Oxford, internationalism is most truly understood How much the paths of real progress may be irretrievably harmed by a too narrowed and restricted outlook, especially when applied to patriotism and nationalism

Today the women, too, share and know "the secret none can utter"  
Two girls, nay, rather, two young Portias, discoursed together over a book in  
an Oxford book-shop with shining eyes Nearer I edged and stole a glance.  
"That is what Oxford means", said one "Just that!" I saw they were  
reading Rupert Brooke's poem *The Hill* And as I stole away—guilty of having

LIONEL JOHNSON

been all unbidden at a marvellous intimate feast—I had full knowledge of the lines they lingered on.

Heart of my heart, our heaven now is won!  
We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.  
Life is our cry

Yes, they had won their heaven. Soon I found they were to leave it, for they were in 'Schools'. But already they were glad and confident for they were of "Earth's best" their lesson had been fully learned, away beyond, in the sweet lush meadows bordering Cher and Isis, or again maybe, under "Magdalen elms and Trinity limes" And now, for them,—“Over the four long years” To me it seemed I knew their secret—even to the end of time

“We have kept the faith!” we said;  
“We shall go down with unreluctant tread  
“Rose-crowned into the darkness!”

They would not falter, those two young Portias, in life's future conflict. They had kept the faith! And that is what Oxford gives, that is what Oxford knows—When you 'go down'

### *The Song of the Little Hunter*

Ere Mor the Peacock flutters ere the Monkey people cry,  
Ere Chil the Kite swoops down a furlong sheer,  
Through the jungle very softly flits a Shadow and a sigh—  
He is Fear, O little Hunter, he is Fear !

Very softly down the glade runs a waiting, watching shade,  
And the whisper spreads and widens far and near ;  
And the sweat is on thy brow, for he passes even now—  
He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear !

Ere the Moon has climbed the mountain, ere the rocks  
are ribbed with light,  
When the downward-dipping tails are dank and drear ;  
Comes a breathing heard behind thee, snuffle—snuffle  
through the night—  
It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear !

On thy knees and draw the bow, bid the shrilling arrow go ;  
In the empty mocking thicket plunge the spear ;  
But thy hands are loosed and weak, and the blood has left  
thy cheek—  
It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear !





coming nearer the soul of India than most of his countrymen', as again Mr. Bhupal Singh insists, but it cannot be denied that the best Kipling has roots bedded in the English soil. No one can bring 'jingo patriotism' as a charge against the Kipling of *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*. This soil of oak and thorn

Is not any common Earth,  
Water or wood or air,  
But Merlin's Isle of Gramarye,  
Where you and I will fare.

There is a fine humanity behind his best writing and I know of no more inspiring song for the young than that sung by the brothers of Mowgli who keep the Jungle Law

Children of the Camp are we,  
Serving each in his degree,  
Children of the yoke and goad,  
Pack and harness, pad and load.

Lastly there is a thing that amid the meed of praise and blame meted out to Kipling has been very much overlooked, and that is how when we look more carefully we find that his Muse obeys a technical perfection at times beyond all praise so like hand and glove does form and content fit together as here in *The Song of the Little Hunter*. Here we see a cleverly beaten out trochaic pattern combined with a splendidly wrought refrain whose magic brings home perfectly the eerie compelling mood. The fine humanity that has been mentioned is surely behind this poem and could scarcely be improved. What finer observation too of the ways of nature in the Indian venue could we have than this?

Rise like the sun over the Lands of the East,  
So that in Badakshan once more the precious rubies  
shine!

Let your voice at night carry its message to Heaven :  
Let the Stars of Night share the inviolable secret with  
you !

At this time of crisis, in this hour of decision,  
Let there go forth a recording of actions—  
For Life is Action !"

### SIR MOHAMMED IQBAL

This piece is taken from *Khizr-i-Rah* and will be found in *Bang-e-Dara* (Call of the Bell)

In the lines before us the poet gives an inspiring call to cast off sloth. Life reveals itself in a searching after Truth. But we must understand that the goal is by no means easy. Above all the prize will evade us unless we become truly apprehensive of our real natures. In the Greek social system 'know thyself' was a criterion for good citizenship. The Athenian code would not permit of a 'half-baked' condition among its members. Iqbal would also tell us that first we must achieve an 'inner-wisdom' before we can at the moment of crisis translate the best that is in us into action. Herein we find a warning that democracy may well heed. As a recent writer has put it the failure of democracy—especially in those countries where it is still most fondly preserved—is the failure of not knowing its own mind. "From this he deduces the essential need for education in the public. "The power of the masses to control international affairs is a relatively new phenomenon. . . . You would not put a dangerous instrument into the hands of a child.

If the democracy is to control foreign policy, it must go to school as those did who controlled it in the past" In the line

First create a soul in your tenement of clay

Iqbal obviously is using the word soul as equivalent to the state of knowing that sensitiveness, that awareness without which we can form no judgement, no valuation of affairs about us that will be of the slightest help either to peoples or to individuals, or to ourselves. We must therefore bend all our efforts to creating that *Heaven Within*, for then and then only shall we be of some account in the affairs of men and of nations.

If you are among those with the Life-force vibrant,  
If you are convincingly alive, create a world of your own

Mr Lawrence Binyon in his enthralling book *The Spirit of Man in Asian Art* tells of a lacquer toilet-box beside a Chinese lady who examines herself in her mirror. It bears the following legend. "Men and women know how to adorn their faces but there is none who knows how to adorn his soul .. chasten your soul therefore, make it beautiful.

This too, I think, must be part of what Iqbal means when he says :

*First create a soul in your tenement of clay*

*The Listeners*

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,  
Knocking on the moonlit door;  
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses  
Of the forest's ferny floor;  
And a bird flew up out of the turret,  
Above the Traveller's head.  
And he smote upon the door again a second time;  
"Is there anybody there?" he said,  
But no one descended to the Traveller;  
No head from the leaf-fringed sill  
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,  
Where he stood perplexed and still.  
But only a host of phantom listeners  
That dwelt in the lone house then  
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight  
To that voice from the world of men  
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark Stair,  
That goes down to the empty hall,  
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken  
By the lonely Traveller's call  
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,  
Their stillness answering his cry,  
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,  
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;  
For he suddenly smote on the door, even

WALTER DE LA MARE

Louder, and lifted his head :—  
“ Tell them I came, and no one answered,  
That I kept my word,” he said,  
Never the least stir made the listeners,  
Though every word he spake  
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house  
From the one man left awake ,  
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,  
And the sound of iron on stone,  
And how the silence surged softly backward,  
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

WALTER DE LA MARE

In the poetry of de la Mare we are at grips with the poetry of the purest English lyric tradition. Other than Mr W B Yeats there is perhaps no poet who can sing so musically and so magically as de la Mare. He is a writer of the finest dream lyrics of our time. Sometimes the weirdness of his effects links him with such a magician as Coleridge. The poetry of refuge and the poetry of escape can find few lovelier interpreters. Such poems as *Tartary*, *Arabia* and others of the class take us into the poetry of pure magic. “ In this world of change the human heart is a traveller pursuing an endless quest. Again using old romantic imagery to symbolize the dream, de la Mare represents that eternal wanderer as a sort of Knight-errant, and the house at whose moonlit door he knocks is the old chateau, more subtly eerie than the deserted ruins of Gothic romance.” Such is the atmosphere of *The Listeners*, his best known poem. De la Mare's poetry is not for everybody and there are some critics who would minimize the importance of this poet because his themes mostly seem to be expression of nostalgia and the quest

for lost paradises. The world of Letters today prides itself before all upon its intellectualism which tends to become a form of snobbery, and if allowed free run hinders the power of appreciation of pure poetry as such, and in fact ultimately leads to deficiency of imagination. Mr. Megroz again has so aptly put it "those who fit perfectly into the world as it is and never experience the loneliness of longing for an exiled beauty are not the most courageous and intelligent, but those who have sold their spiritual birth-right for a mess of pottage. Dream Poetry that especially voices regret at the mortality of lovely things and vibrates with the airy rumours of a paradise beyond the grasp of time is part of the human mind's creation of a spiritual reality". Much of this is the texture of the poetry of de la Mare and nobody perhaps "has worked it so delicately and so hauntingly since the days when Robert Herrick gave his message *To The Virgins to make much of Time* :

Breathe not—trespass not;  
Of this green and darkling spot,  
Latticed from the moon's beams,  
Perchance a distant dreamer's dreams."

*The Passing Strange*

Out of the earth to rest or range  
Perpetual in perpetual change—  
The unknown passing through the strange.

Water and saltness held together  
To tread the dust and stand the weather  
And plough the field and stretch the tether

To pass the wine-cup and be witty,  
Water the sands and build the city,  
Slaughter like devils and have pity,

Be red with rage and pale with lust,  
Make beauty come, make peace, make trust—  
Water and saltness mixed with dust,

Drive over earth, swim under sea,  
Fly in the eagle's secrecy,  
Guess where the hidden comets be,

Know all the deathly seeds that still  
Queen Helen's beauty Caesar's will,  
And slay them even as they kill;

Fashion an altar for a rood,  
Defile a continent with blood,  
And watch a brother starve for food,



Love like a madman, shaking, blind,  
Till self is burnt into a kind  
Possession of another mind ;

Brood upon beauty till the grace  
Of beauty with the holy face  
Brings peace into the bitter place ;

Probe in the lifeless granites, scan  
The stars for hope, for guide, for plan ;  
Live as a woman or a man ;

Fasten to lover or to friend  
Until the heart break at the end,  
The break of death that cannot mend ;

Then to lie useless, helpless, still,  
Down in the earth, in dark, to fill  
The roots of grass or daffodil.

Down in the earth, in dark, alone,  
A mockery of the ghost in bone,  
The strangeness passing the unknown.

Time will go by, that outlasts clocks,  
Dawn in the thorps will rouse the cocks,  
Sunset be glory on the rocks.

But it, the thing, will never heed  
Even the rootling from the seed  
Thrusting to suck it for its need.

JOHN MASEFIELD

Since moons decay and suns decline  
How else should end this life of mine?  
Water and saltness are not wine.

But in the darkest hour of night,  
When even the foxes peer for sight,  
The byre-cock crows; he feels the light.

So, in this water mixed with dust,  
The byre-cock spirit crows from trust  
That death will change because it must,

For all things change—the darkness changes,  
The wandering spirits change their ranges,  
The corn is gathered to the granges

The corn is sown again, it grows;  
The stars burn out, the darkness goes,  
The rhythms change, they do not close

They change, and we, who pass like foam,  
Like dust blown through the streets of Rome,  
Change ever too; we have no home,

Only a beauty, only a power,  
Sad in the fruit, bright in the flower,  
Endlessly erring for its hour,

But gathering, as we stray, a sense  
Of Life, so lovely and intense,  
It lingers when we wander hence,

JOHN MASEFIELD

That those who follow feel behind  
Their backs, when all before is blind,  
Our joy, a rampant to the mind

JOHN MASEFIELD

Mr Masefield has succeeded Robert Bridges as Poet-Laureate and in the early decades of the century he sprang into prominence with his tremendous narrative successes *The Everlasting Mercy*, *The Daffodil Fields* and *The Widow in the Bye-street*. Among much that is strained, at times violent and melodramatic, there is a note that gives contrasts where pure beauty gains its own, a quality made all the more interesting by another note that is struck along with it, that of profound pity. It is only natural that in narrative poems of such length his style should be unequalled. *Lollington Downs* is mainly a sonnet sequence where the poet tries "to reconcile those splendid dreams of youth, those heroisms of manhood, the bitterness and the beauty which so often inspired the narrative with an exhilarating nobility". Masefield has his place in the English tradition, his style reaching back for its suggestion to Chaucer on the one hand and to William Morris on the other.

# HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

## *Caravan*

Deserts of human weariness  
Where the suns are blinding and hot  
Covered slowly by pale and slender-throated  
Camels of thought.

Camels of drowsed contemplation  
Seeking strange desert-wells  
And breaking the slumbrous desert-air  
With invisible bells

To what far places of pilgrimage  
Do they turn,—in their tread  
The utter loneliness of all life between  
Daybreak's and sundown's red.

All is an endless blur of fire-gold  
Shot out to a million glares.  
The slow and solitary aeons are only  
Dim footfalls of theirs

Breaklessly in a long silent line  
Horizonward the camels seem  
To move, ever move, casting cool shadows  
Like to bodies of dream

*Quest*

Each thought is as a shell that leaps from me  
 And falls upon the shifting sands of time ;  
 Within its little hollow what sublime  
 High murmuring of what many-moded sea  
 Resounds rich-echoes and continually ?  
 Thrice exquisite lone nursing of the chime  
 Of unseen oceans that through aeons climb  
 Self-builed peaks of waves supremely free  
 To take whatever changing form they like,  
 To cure into a momentary dome  
 Breaking into an epic of white foam  
 Dumbly to vanish into depths, or strike  
 Immortal harmonies of some great deep  
 Concealing under wakefulness a giant sleep

I seek true liberation, and I crave  
 A luminous unbondaging from code  
 And formula, for I would take the road  
 Of an immense vast rapture, like a wave  
 Which knows no inward rhythm of ocean save  
 The individual one unto it owed  
 For its high nature that has ever glowed  
 Under such mystic moons as pearl and pave  
 Shoreless immensities. It never bore  
 Time's inky shadow on its heaving vast  
 Rolled there where time has never shadow cast ;  
 O moon within ! I sense you more and more

Drawing each mood of mine towards a full  
Wave-peak as image in response to your white pull.

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

The work of Harindranath Chattopadhyaya is not so well known throughout India as it should be. He belongs, not to the elder, but the middle generation of Indian poets, who use English with a fluency equal to their mother tongue. Our poet's mastery of English is such as to have astonished many of the most eminent men of letters both in England, and Ireland.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya must be included among our mystics, he has no affinities whatever with this modern, too commercialized, age of letters. Of many tributes paid to this young poet I am sure he would best wish to be remembered by that of Sri Aurobindo.

"Here perhaps are the beginnings of a supreme utterance of the Indian soul in the rhythm of the English tongue. We may well hope to find in him a supreme singer of the vision of God in Nature and Life and the meeting of the divine and the human which must be at first the most vivifying and liberating part of India's message to humanity."

*The Ballad of Iskander*

*Aflatus and Aristu and King Iskander  
or Plato, Aristotle, Alexander*

Sultan Iskander sat him down  
On his golden throne, in his golden crown,  
And shouted, "Wine and flute-girls three,  
And the Captain, ho! of my ships at sea!"

He drank his bowl of wine; he kept  
The flute-girls dancing till they wept,  
Praised and kissed their painted lips,  
And turned to the Captain of all his Ships

And cried, "O Lord of my ships that go  
From the Persian Gulf to the Pits of Snow,  
Inquire for men unknown to man!"  
Said Sultan Iskander of Yoonistan.

"Daroosh is dead, and I am King  
Of Everywhere and Everything.  
Yet leagues and leagues away for sure  
The lion-hearted dream of war.

"Admiral, I command you sail!  
Take you a ship of silver mail,  
And fifty sailors, young and bold,  
And stack provision deep in the hold.

" And seek out twenty men that know  
All babel tongues which flaunt and flow ;  
And stay ! Impress those learned two,  
Old Aflatun, and Aristu

" And set your prow South-western ways  
A thousand bright and dimpling days,  
And find me lion-hearted Lords  
With breasts to feed our rusting swords."

The captain of the Ships bowed low.  
" Sir," he replied, " I will do so "  
And down he rode to the harbour mouth,  
To choose a boat to carry him South

And he launched a ship of silver mail,  
With fifty lads to hoist the sail,  
And twenty wise-all tongues they knew,  
And Aflatun, and Aristu

There had not dawned the second day  
But the glittering galleon sailed away,  
And through the night like one great bell  
The marshalled armies sang farewell

In twenty days the silver ship  
Has passed the Isle of Serendip,  
And made the flat Arauman coasts  
Inhabited, at noon, by Ghosts



In thirty days the ship was far  
Beyond the land of Calcohar,  
Where men drink Dead Men's Blood for wine,  
And dye their beards alizarine

But on the hundredth day there came  
Storm with his windy wings aflame,  
And drave them out to that Lone Sea  
Whose shores are near Eternity

\* \* \* \*

For seven years and seven years  
Sailed those forgotten mariners,  
Nor could they spy on either hand  
The faintest level of good red land

Bird or fish they saw not one ;  
There swam no ship beside their own  
And day-night long the lilled Deep  
Lay around them, with its flowers asleep

The beams began to warp and crack,  
The silver plates turned filthy black  
And drooping down on the carven rails  
Hung those once lovely silken sails

And all the great ship's crew who were  
Such noble lads to do and dare  
Grew old and tired of the changeless sky  
And laid them down on the deck to die.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

And they who spake all tongues there be  
Made antics with solemnity,  
Or closely huddled each to each,  
Talked ribald in a foreign speech.

And Aflatun and Aristu  
Let their Beards grow, and their Beards grew  
Round and about the mainmast tree  
Where they stood still, and watched the sea

And day by day their Captain grey  
Knelt on the rotting poop to pray ;  
And yet despite ten thousand prayers  
They saw no ship that was not theirs

When thrice the seven years had passed  
They saw a ship, a ship at last !  
Untarnished glowed its silver mail,  
Windless bellied its silken sail.

With a shout the grizzled sailors rose  
Cursing the years of sick repose,  
And they who spake in tongues unknown,  
Gladly reverted to their own

The Captain leapt and left his prayers  
And hastened down the dust-dark stairs,  
And taking to hand a brazen whip  
He woke to life the long dead ship.

But Aflatun and Aristu,  
Who had no work that they could do,  
Gazed at the stranger Ship and Sea  
With their beards around the mainmast tree.

Nearer and nearer the new boat came,  
Till the hands cried out on the old ship's shame—  
"Silken sail to a silver boat,  
We too shone when we first set float!"

Swifter and swifter the bright boat sped,  
But the hands spake thin like men long dead—  
"How striking like that boat were we  
In the days, sweet days, when we put to sea."

The ship all black and the ship all white  
Met like the meeting of day and night,  
Met, and there lay serene dark green  
A twilight yard of the sea between

And the twenty masters of foreign speech  
Of every tongue they knew tried each;  
Smiling the silver Captain heard,  
But he shook his head and said no word

Then Aflatun and Aristu  
Addressed the silver Lord anew,  
Speaking their language of Yoonistan  
Like countrymen to a countryman

And "Whence," they cried, "O Sons of Pride,  
Sail you the dark eternal tide?  
Lie your halls to the South or North,  
And who is the King that sent you forth?"

"We live," replied that Lord with a smile,  
"A mile beyond the millionth mile,  
We know not South and we know not North,  
And SULTAN ISKANDER sent us forth "

Said Aristu to Aflatun—  
"Surely our King, despondent soon,  
Has sent this second ship to find  
Unconquered tracts of humankind "

But Aflatun turned round on him  
Laughing a bitter laugh and grim  
"Alas," he said, "O Aristu,  
A white weak thin old fool are you

"And does yon silver Ship appear  
As she had journeyed twenty year?  
And has that silver Captain's face  
A mortal or immortal grace?

"Theirs is the land (as I well know)  
Where live the Shapes of Things Below:  
Theirs is the country where they keep  
The Images men see in sleep

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

" Theirs is the land behind the Door,  
And theirs the old ideal shore.  
They steer our ship - behold our crew  
Ideal, and our Captain too

" And lo! besides that mainmast tree  
Two tall and shining forms I see,  
And they are what we ought to be,  
Yet we are they, and they are we "

He spake, and some young Zephyr stirred,  
The two ships touched : no sound was heard ;  
The Black Ship crumbled into air ;  
Only the Phantom Ship was there.

And a great cry rang round the sky  
Of glorious singers sweeping by,  
And calm and fair on waves that shone  
The Silver Ship sailed on and on.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

James Elroy Flecker died of consumption at Davos in Switzerland in 1916, leaving as legacy an inheritance as rich in promise as was that of Rupert Brooke. He had studied first at Oxford, and then in Oriental languages at Cambridge. In the richness of his colour-texture he is in the Spenser-Keats tradition, but in his infinite ' power of suggestion ' he follows the prevailing interest of the moderns, and wind from France has blown more than quietly on the technique of his Muse.

We have here a medley of elements and influences. In thought this poem belongs to the modern ballad, also in its masterly and polished finish, in its directness too it does not forget the lesson of the folk-ballad.

We are not allowed to forget *The Ancient Mariner*, but there are touches quite beyond a Coleridge, particularly in the bizarre humour that peeps out so often, even when the moment seems to be most serious. Who can ever forget the boldness of the opening, with Alexander's wonderful oriental metamorphosis: his Mussalman adoption? Here is a mentality that takes its orientalism as freshly as that famous Frederic II son of the Emperor Barbarossa, at whose court Arabic was spoken as freely as Provencal. Who can forget the bizarre jest of the 'land of Calcobar,' where men drink 'Dead Men's Blood for wine, and dye their beards alzarine'?

We are plunged directly into the business of the poem, as it is the business of all perfectly good ballads to do. Alexander is thirsty for more discoveries, and he calls his captain and states his wishes, commands him to gather a crew, and—wonderful thought—bids him impress among them those twin wonders of the ancient world—Plato and Aristotle,—'those learned two, old Aflatun, and Aristu'. With a 'ship of silver mail' and *these*, what better ingredients could any story desire for its opening?

The 'ship of silver mail,' the 'glittering galleon' sails forth over the calm ocean and long after 'through the night like one great bell' the marshalled armies sing them a farewell.

Fair journeying meets them until they come upon the hundredth day, and then 'there came storm with his windy wings aflame, and drove them out to that Lone Sea whose shores are near Eternity'. And here we enter an atmosphere of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*

Bird or fish they saw not one,  
There swam no ship beside their own  
And day-night long the lilyed Deep  
Lay around them, with its flowers asleep

The next stanza might have come straight from Coleridge, the masterly mingling of romance and realism for which Shakespeare had prepared the way

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

The beams began to warp and crack,  
The silver plates turned filthy black,  
And drooping down on the carven rails  
Hung those once lovely silken sails.

Despair, indifference, the sense of life, of vigour, and of great design,  
the very mission of Alexander, the great emprise, even faith itself, all are  
slipping away, until

all the great ship's crew who were  
Such noble lads to do and dare  
Grew old and tired of the changeless sky  
And laid them down on the deck to die.

All is without avail, and the great philosophers themselves are proven  
useless in this great extremity for have they not

Let their Beards grow, and the Beards grow  
Round and about the mainmast tree?

And now is not all this a cunning parallel that might illustrate the lives  
of every one of us?

Up to now we have suspected Flecker of little more than the desire  
to tell a very decorative story, but here we see the signs of a double and  
deeper purpose, ever elusive, by the very nature of the treatment he has  
chosen, but the threads of which may be yet picked out if we look carefully  
enough. Do not all of us set out on youth's journey, is there not for us  
the great emprise, the goal, and the faith? And then after a while surely  
are we beset, no longer may we keep our course or reckoning; we falter;  
we turn aside, we are dismayed, and above all, those ideals with  
which we set out with such confidence, those noble thoughts leading  
to equally noble actions, where are they? All has become entangled and  
confused, all has gone down before the demon of self, and our once glitter-  
ing ship is no more a thing of beauty, for the "silver plates" have turned  
filthy black

And drooping down on the carven rails  
Hung those once lovely silken sails

But the art of Flecker is that he will never allow us to be too aware of all this. First he would have us read the poem as a thing of beauty and many have certainly so read it and been content. Afterwards, if we so wish, he perhaps would have us reflect, and out of such reflection I think such thoughts as these must come. The point at which they begin to arise is on the appearance of the second ship:

Untarnished glowed its silver mail,  
Windless bellied the silken sail

Then on the ancient boat there is the rustle of awakening, and the Captain taking his brazen whip wakes to life the long dead ship. Only Afiatun and Aristu remain calm, gazing

at the stranger Ship and Sea  
With their beards around the mainmast tree

And one of them, we may depend, sees a thing, the others do not, and in this perhaps we are to recognize the great reward. What he sees is the failure of their great undertaking: to themselves they may seem even humbugs, but the wonderful thing is they have not failed in the world's eyes, for the imaginations of men have been busied about them and their mysterious disappearance, and lo,—this, that they now see, is *themselves* as they still live in men's minds, for men have made of them a legend. And it is here that we must take an extension of Flecker's parable until it embraces the preciousness of the imaginative power of man out of which all legends must grow. For Time has wrought upon that wondrous Argosy of Sultan Iskander until all connected with it have grown as splendid as ever Odysseus and his manners who live on in men's minds for ever immortal and unsullied by Time or Chance, by Death, Despair and the thousand nightmares of the soul.

But, to Aristu, the 'Silver Ship' is still an enigma, and he blunders before his brother philosopher

'Surely our King, despondent soon,  
Has sent this second ship to find  
Unconquered tracts of humankind'



JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Then from Plato's deeper knowledge he is answered :

"Alas," he said, "O Aristu,  
A white weak thin old fool are you

"And does yon Silver Ship appear  
As she had journeyed twenty year?  
And has that silver Captain's face  
*A mortal or Immortal grace?*"

That last is perhaps the most pregnant line in the whole is the great 'open sesame' of Flecker's meaning. The Captain's face has an immortal grace, for it is the face that now lives only in the of men's minds—it is the face belonging to one who inhabits where they keep the Images men see in sleep.

We see now that the poem contains really a composite of Silver Ship and its Captain stand as symbols for our ideal: dazzling splendour of imagination, from which spring romance and The source of our lives which allows these qualities inherent in dwindle and tarnish is to fail in the perfection of our life's goal—to in mind as well as body. Thus the Black Ship only apparently in achieving its object, for though it may be posted as missing, never cease to talk of it while there is living speech, or of Sultan Aflatur, or Aristu because it has become part of the world's legend, then, is the comfort of the White Ship's message, and which at present Aflatur truly perceives. Says Aflatur

"Theirs is the land behind the Door,  
And theirs the old ideal shore  
They steer our ship behold our crew  
Ideal, and our Captain too"

And then we have the final supreme touch, and where we feel tion must sink into the doubting Aristu

"And lo! besides that mainmast tree  
Two tall and shining forms I see,

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

And they are what we ought to be,  
*Yet we are they, and they are we."*

For the real is no more, and the unreal has become the real.

He spake, and some young Zephyr stirred,  
The two ships touched: no sound was heard;  
The Black Ship crumbled into air,  
Only the Phantom Ship was there

And with that the bow has been tied neatly on Flecker's surprising casket of beauty. For what are our most exquisite visions but phantoms that are more real than reality? "We are nearer waking when we dream that we dream", has said that young German philosopher, a contemporary of Keats, who died of the same malady and at about the same time—Friedrich von Hardenbourg—"Novalis"

And a great cry rang round the sky  
Of glorious singers sweeping by

And so they will always sing, for who does not hear still in calm sweet days the mariners of the old arch mariner—Odysseus? And are not these of that same company?

And calm and fair on waves that shone  
The Silver Ship sailed on and on

And for those of us who can shield and preserve our phantoms so too shall we always sail to such can never be denied the kingdom of heaven.

But here I have been trying to give a name to that which a genius has given to us out of his infinite power of 'poetic suggestion', which, strictly speaking, is to have attempted the impossible.

*The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*

Just now the lilac is in bloom,  
All before my little room ;  
And in my flower-beds, I think,  
Smile the carnation and the pink ;  
And down the borders, well I know,  
The poppy and the pansy blow . . . . .  
Oh ! there the chestnuts, summer through,  
Beside the river make for you  
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep  
Deeply above ; and green and deep  
The stream mysterious glides beneath,  
Green as a dream and deep as death.—  
Oh, damn ! I know it ! and I know  
How the May fields all golden show,  
And when the day is young and sweet,  
Gild gloriously the bare feet  
That run to bathe . . .

*Du lieber Gott !*

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,  
And there the shadowed waters fresh  
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh  
*Temperamentvoll* German Jews  
Drink beer around ; and *there* the dews  
Are soft beneath a morn of gold,

Here tulips bloom as they are told ;  
 Unkempt about those hedges blows  
 An English unofficial rose ;  
 And there the unregulated sun  
 Slopes down to rest when day is done,  
 And wakes a vague unpunctual star,  
 A slippered Hesper ; and there are  
 Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton  
 Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten*  
*είσε γερουμν* . . . would I were  
 In Grantchester, in Grantchester !—  
 Some, it may be can get in touch  
 With Nature there, or Earth, or such  
 And clever modern men have seen  
 A Faun a-peeping through the green,  
 And felt the Classics were not dead,  
 To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,  
 Or hear the Goat-foot piping low .  
 But these are things I do not know  
 I only know that you may lie  
 Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,  
 And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,  
 Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,  
 Until the centuries blend and blur  
 In Grantchester, in Grantchester  
 Still in the dawnlit waters cool  
 His ghostly Lordship swims his pool  
 And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,  
 Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx ;

Dan Chaucer hears his river still  
 Chatter beneath a phantom mill ;  
 Tennyson notes, with studious eye,  
 How Cambridge waters hurry by.....  
 And in that garden black and white,  
 Creep whispers through the grass all night ;  
 And spectral dance, before the dawn,  
 A hundred Vicars down the lawn ,  
 Curates, long dust, will come and go  
 On lissom, clerical, printless toe ;  
 And oft between the boughs is seen  
 The sly shade of a Rural Dean....  
 Till, at a shiver in the skies  
 Vanishing with Satanic cries,  
 The prim ecclesiastic rout  
 Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,  
 Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,  
 The falling house that never falls.  
 God ! I will pack, and take a train,  
 And get me to England once again !  
 For England's the one land, I know,  
 Where men with Splendid Hearts may go ;  
 And Cambridgeshire, of all England,  
 The shire for Men who Understand ;  
 And of *that* district I prefer  
 The lovely hamlet Grantchester.  
 For Cambridge people rarely smile,  
 Being urban, squat, and packed with guile ;  
 And Royston men in the far South

Are black and fierce and strange of mouth ;  
 At Over they fling oaths at one,  
 And worse than oaths at Trumpington,  
 And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,  
 And there's none in Harston under thirty,  
 And folks in Shelford and those parts,  
 Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,  
 And Barton men make cockney rhymes,  
 And Coton's full of nameless crimes,  
 And things are done you'd not believe  
 At Madingly on Christmas Eve.  
 Strong men have run for miles and miles  
 When one from Cherry Hinton smiles ,  
 Strong men have blanched and shot their wives  
 Rather than send them to St. Ives ,  
 Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,  
 To hear what happened at Babraham  
 But Grantchester ! ah, Grantchester !  
 There's peace and holy quiet there,  
 Great clouds along pacific skies,  
 And men and women with straight eyes,  
 Lithe children lovelier than a dream,  
 A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,  
 And little kindly winds that creep  
 Round twilight corners, half asleep  
 In Grantchester their skins are white,  
 They bathe by day, they bathe by night.  
 The women there do all they ought ;  
 The men observe the Rules of Thought,

They love the Good, they worship Truth ;  
 They laugh uproariously in youth ,  
 (And when they get to feeling old,  
 They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . . .

Ah God ! to see the branches stir  
 Across the moon at Grantchester !  
 To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten,  
 Unforgettable, unforgotten  
 River smell, and hear the breeze  
 Sobbing in the little trees !  
 Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand  
 Still guardians of that holy land ?  
 The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,  
 The yet unacademic stream ?  
 Is dawn a secret shy and cold  
 Anadyomene, silver-gold ?  
 And sunset still a golden sea  
 From Haslingfield to Madingly ?  
 And after, ere the night is born,  
 Do hares come out about the corn ?  
 Oh, is the water sweet and cool  
 Gentle and brown, above the pool ?  
 And laughs the immortal river still  
 Under the mill, under the mill ?  
 Say, is there Beauty yet to find ?  
 And Certainty ? and Quiet kind ?  
 Deep meadows yet, for to forget  
 The lies, and truths, and pain ? . oh ! yet

RUPERT BROOKE

Stands the Church clock at ten to three?  
And is there honey still for tea?

(*Cafe des Westens*, Berlin).

RUPERT BROOKE

Perhaps of all the young poets who captured and enslaved the ardour and imagination of England's young men during the terrible days of 1914, and after, none was so remarkable or so full of promise as Rupert Brooke. With looks as striking as a Shelley, a Byron, or a Keats, Brooke combined a charming personality, and an intellect, critical, and penetrating. No wonder then young Cambridge sat at his feet, while the Dons perhaps were conscious that their venerable seat of learning had been fortunate once again in her welcomes.

With Rupert Brooke we strike the definitely modern note of young England, with its habit of query, and of analysis of everything about them. To observe keenly was the thing, and for ever be asking—why? There is ever an increasing enlargement of range in subject matter, and sometimes an intellectual hardness that does not eschew the scientific, such as we may find in the poetic work of Mr. Aldous Huxley, though today the Muse is deserted by him. We have a flash of this in Brooke in a poem like "*Heaven*"

But it is in the more traditional and more spontaneous mood, the poetry of sincerity, where we must look for the Brooke that will live for us memorable and moving poems of the quality of *The Dead*, and *The Soldier*.

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,  
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.



and

If I should die, thank only this of me.

That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is for ever England

Yet of all Rupert Brooke's poems none is so filled with the traditional spirit, with freshness and spontaneity as *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*. All the lush verdure of England's countryside, Chaucer's very England, and an atmosphere of soft incredible quietude is here rendered more magical by the artful contrast with the doings of a summer's day surrounding the *Cafe des Westens*, Berlin

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,  
And *there* the shadowed waters fresh  
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh

Beside him the novelty is no longer so crisp, of 'the temperament' of German Jews, who drink beer about him. It had all been very amusing enough for a time, this plunge into the German capital. But at last there has come this evening when sitting in the *Cafe des Westens* a nostalgia upon him, and the taste has grown stale in the mouth. No doubt in a foreign land nostalgia will come upon us sometime or other no matter how bewildering the beauties. We have Browning as the most historic case, and was ever a man so wedded to the country of his adoption?

Oh, to be in England  
Now that April's here!

Travellers in many lands find an appeal in England, an indefinable subtlety, a landscape whose undulations, with their shifting shadows upon greens of every hue, from emerald to myrtle, a landscape that stunts nothing in colour or in contour, or in the picturesque. In Grantchester:

. there the chestnuts, summer through,  
Beside the river make for you  
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep  
Deeply above, and green and deep

RUPERT BROOKE

The stream mysterious glides beneath,  
Green as a dream and deep as death

Nor in Grantchester are we allowed to forget the great ones of English poetry.

Dan Chaucer hears his river still  
Chatter beneath a phantom mill,  
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,  
How Cambridge waters hurry by ..

Somehow, with Vicars, our poet has opined that none in the English social system can be the epicures of quietude, of dignified retirement, to such a pleasant degree; kind to their flock, not least kind to themselves, sometimes a little shy, a little prim;—but what more would you know? If indeed you would penetrate into the detail of English rural life, then there are waiting for you the novels of Anthony Trollope. But Rupert Brooke has caught for us the frock-coated gentry in these inimitable lines

And in that garden, black and white  
Creep whispers through the grass all night,  
And spectral dance, before the dawn  
A hundred Vicars down the lawn

Nor are curates forgotten

Curates, long dust, will come and go  
On lissom, clerical, printless toe.

Throughout this poem, beyond the pictorial and satirical felicities, we have a music that flows with perfect mastery over the octosyllabic couplet

Coming to the *thought*, one is put in mind of an essay called *The Heavenly Contemplation* by Professor Chauncey Brewster Tinker of Yale. In this essay the writer does more than suggest that a good many of our modern poets have got out of any habit of contemplation at all. He brings to his

and a most interesting piece of evidence from the pen of that virtuoso of the younger school of epigrammatists— Mr Beverley Nichols Mr Nichols has been meeting Mr Stravinsky who is considered the very last word in modern music The composer shows him a manuscript of a piano sonata on the cover of which Stravinsky has written in large letters: "This sonata to be played with absolutely no expression whatever" Says Mr. Nichols

"We might apply that remark of Stravinsky's to the whole of life as it is seen by the youth of England 'This life is to be played with absolutely no expression whatever, because we know we are born only to suffer, that everything is futile, and that the best we can do is to harden our hearts'"

What the East has known for centuries as 'kismet' is now known to the West as 'defeatism,' since we cannot get away from our 'isms,' or better still 'futility' But this present attitude to life seems to rest above all upon a definite inability or refusal by the young men of today to see beauty, or find subject for 'heavenly contemplation', or, with Plato, make beauty a matter for everyday politics

Had Rupert Brooke been with us now it seems certain that we have sufficient evidence that he would not have joined with this fraternity Of no poem more than *Grantchester* can we say so decidedly that 'the perpetual theme of futility' is so far away *The Heavenly Contemplation* was never more splendid than in such lines as

Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!  
 There's peace and holy quiet there,  
 Great clouds along pacific skies,  
 And men and women with straight eyes,  
 Lithe children lovelier than a dream  
 A bosky wood, a alumbrous stream,  
 And little kindly winds that creep  
 Round twilight corners, half asleep

It is suggested that today we have lost the capacity for seeing or needing such things as that, for are we not all engaged in running after Mr Huxley.

who like the young man in the German fairy-tale holds a magical goose under his arm, accumulating as he meanders on his intellectual way an ever-increasing queue, and we may hardly take our leave until we are bidden. His cleverness is astounding, but it is used to express 'the perpetual theme of futility' in what Mr. Nichols has named his 'cold antiseptic prose'

But it is interesting to know that Professor Tinker and Mr. Nichols have both arrived at similar conclusions approached, we may suspect, through very different avenues: the values for which they have such regard, Brooke has written of for us in *The Busy Heart*.

I have need of a thousand things, lovely and durable  
And to taste them slowly like tasting a sweet food  
I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

In those few lines Rupert Brooke has set down for us, once and for all, the things that matter if we would any of us, at any time, ever essay *The Heavenly Contemplation* in order to reach the heavenly heights

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It is suggested that today we have lost the capacity for seeing or needing such things as that, for are we not all engaged in running after Mr Huxley.

Oh you who flash your arms like rockets to heaven,  
Who in lassitude leans as yachts on the sea-wind lie !  
Who crowd in crowds like rhododendrons in blossom,  
Who stand alone in despair like a guttering light ;  
Who grappling down with work or hate or passion  
Take writhing forms of all beasts that sweat and that  
fight ,  
You who are twisted in grief like crumpling beech-  
leaves,  
Who curl in sleep like kittens, who mass as a swarm  
Of bees that vibrate with revolt ; who fall to earth  
And rot like a bean-pod ; what are you, oh multiform ?

*When Wilt Thou Teach The People—?*

When wilt thou teach the people,  
God of justice, to save themselves—  
They have been saved so often  
and sold.  
O God of justice, send no more saviours  
of the people!

When a saviour has saved a people  
they find he has sold them to his father.  
They say . We are saved, but we are starving.  
He says The sooner will you eat imaginary cake in  
the mansions of my father  
They say Can't we have a loaf of common bread ?  
He says . No, you must go to heaven, and eat the  
most marvellous cake,—

*Transformations*

## I. The Town

Oh you stiff shapes, swift transformation seethes  
About you ; only last night you were  
A Sodom smouldering in the dense, soiled air ;  
To-day a thicket of sunshine with blue smoke wreaths.  
To-morrow swimming an evening's vague, dim vapour  
Like a weeded city in shadow under the sea,  
Below the ocean of shimmering light you will be ;  
Then a group of toadstools waiting the moon's white  
taper.

And when I awake in the morning, after rain,  
To find the new houses a cluster of lilies glittering  
In scarlet, alive with the birds' bright twittering,  
I'll say your bond of ugliness is vain

## II The Earth

Oh Earth, you spinning clod of earth,  
And then you lamp, you lemon coloured beauty !  
Oh Earth, you rotten apple rolling downward ,  
Then brilliant Earth, from the burr of night in beauty  
As a jewel-brown horse-chestnut newly issued !  
You are all these, and on me lies the duty  
To see you all, sordid or radiant tissue

## III Men

Oh labourers, oh shuttles across the blue frame of  
morning !  
You feet of the rainbow balancing the sky !

Oh you who flash your arms like rockets to heaven,  
Who in lassitude leans as yachts on the sea-wind lie !  
Who crowd in crowds like rhododendrons in blossom,  
Who stand alone in despair like a guttering light ;  
Who grappling down with work or hate or passion  
Take writhing forms of all beasts that sweat and that fight ,  
You who are twisted in grief like crumpling beech-  
leaves,  
Who curl in sleep like kittens, who mass as a swarm  
Of bees that vibrate with revolt , who fall to earth  
And rot like a bean-pod ; what are you, oh multiform ?

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God of justice, to save themselves—  
They have been saved so often  
and sold  
O God of justice, send no more saviours  
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When a saviour has saved a people  
they find he has sold them to his father  
They say · We are saved, but we are starving.  
He says · The sooner will you eat imaginary cake in  
the mansions of my father  
They say · Can't we have a loaf of common bread?  
He says · No, you must go to heaven, and eat the  
most marvellous cake,—



Or Napoleon says : Since I have saved you from the  
ci-devants,  
you are my property, be prepared to die for me, and  
to work for me.—

Or later republicans say : you are saved,  
therefore you are our savings, our capital  
with which we shall do big business.—

Or Lenin says : you are saved, but you are saved  
wholesale.

You are no longer, men, that is bourgeois ;  
you are items in the soviet state,  
and each item will get its ration,  
but it is the soviet state alone which counts,  
the items are of small importance,  
the state having saved them all.—

And so it goes on, with the saving of the people.  
God of justice, when wilt thou teach them to save  
themselves ?

*Invocation to the Moon*

You beauty, O you beauty  
you glistening, garmentless beauty !  
Great lady, great glorious lady  
greatest of ladies  
crownless and jewelless and garmentless  
because naked you are more wonderful than anything  
we can stroke.

Be good to me, lady, great lady of the nearest  
heavenly mansion, and last !  
Now I am at your gate, you beauty, you lady of all  
nakedness !  
Now I must enter your mansion, and beg your gift  
Moon, O Moon, great lady of the heavenly few.

Far and forgotten is the Villa of Venus the glowing  
and behind me now in the gulfs of space lies the  
golden house of the sun,  
and six have given me gifts, and kissed me god-speed  
kisses of four great lords, beautiful, as they held me  
to their bosom in farewell,  
and kiss of the far-off lingering lady who looks over  
the distant fence of the twilight,  
and one warm kind kiss of the lion with golden paws.

Now, lady of the Moon, now open the gate of your  
silvery house  
and let me come past the silver bells of your flowers  
and the cockle-shells  
into your house, garmentless lady of the last great  
gift :  
who will give me back my lost limbs  
and my lost white fearless breast  
and set me again on moon-remembering feet  
a healed, whole man, O Moon !

Lady, lady of the last house down the long, long  
 street of the stars  
 be good to me now, as I beg you, as you've always  
 been good to men  
 who begged of you and gave you homage  
 and watched for your glistening feet down the garden  
 path !

## D. H. LAWRENCE

Mr Stephen Spender writing recently has some interesting remarks with regard to Lawrence in his Book *The Destructive Element* : " In opposition to most of the writers of his time Lawrence was an artist on the side of the whole civilization not just a supporter of a clique. Firstly he recognized the existence of external nature having a life of its own, independent of the life of man. Secondly his own life was deeply rooted in physical and social experiences shared by the people round him. Thirdly he was deeply interested in what we may in the widest sense call political and moral questions. Fourthly he was not a reactionary, he was a creative writer not merely in the aesthetic sense but in the sense that his writing was a constant search for a new life and a new form of life in which civilization might survive or be recreated." That is a very interesting statement and goes to the essence of a good deal of Lawrence, and the sentence " he recognized the existence of external nature having a life of its own independent of the life of man " goes to the heart of Lawrence's nature poetry. Lawrence chooses as the medium of his verse what today is known as *free verse*, which modern critics claim, he writes more forcibly than any other modern poet. As a poetical innovator he must rank alongside T. S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound. It is the business of these innovators to find new forms and new subject-matter for poetry and to break away from the trammels of the lifeless and the outworn,

## D. H. LAWRENCE

and to find a gesture of their own. As a nature poet he should be compared with Wordsworth, among the older poets, and among contemporaries, with Wilfred Gibson and W. H. Davies, where his poetry would be found to stand out distinct and alive, more particularly through his intense vibrant powers of observation. Let us conclude these remarks with a note from a French critic, M. André Maurois who graphically describes for us Lawrence's vibrant power of observation and attraction. "Nothing is so genuine in Lawrence as this mute communion with nature. He knows animals like brothers loving to spy upon their lives, their love making, their foot-prints in the snow. He imagines the sensations of the strongest among them and has written poems about a couple of tortoises and an essay on the death of a porcupine. We may picture Lawrence crouching on the forest grass with his faun's beard patiently watching the movement of a squirrel, a rabbit, a stag, half animal himself, a creature without frontiers, a piece of nature. For a moment in the quietude of intuition, all conflict then stand resolved. The poet has brought to birth again a virgin world."

Today's younger poets owe much to Lawrence. Perhaps, as much as Pound and Eliot, he has helped them to "blaze new paths" of expression in the modern consciousness. But, for him, the revolt against the tyranny of the Victorian tradition might have been less speedy and complete. It is a revolt as much in content as in form. How Lawrence kept his head in the face of the new systems of Government Europe has suffered in the last decade or so is plainest in *When Wilt Thou Teach The People?* Grim laughter is behind the poem's conclusion.

And so it goes on, with the saving of the people.  
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*The Garden*

BLESSED with the green of rains, charged sweet  
    with scent of May,  
The garden paths caressed her as she walked with  
    slow foot-fall;  
Slight was her frame, but took no pressure of decay  
    And age had found age beautiful, as when youth  
        gave youth all.  
Far over dreamy meadows bells toll the dying sun,  
    And a quiet is on her spirit for the tender drooping  
        balm  
Of the evening filled with perfume the spring has  
    swiftly won,  
And the rising moon that greets her in the garden  
    of her calm.

The ebony stick has brought her to the phlox and  
    marigold.  
And a dream of one is with her who loved this  
    place the best of all,  
Who was straight and clean of stature, as Bayard was  
    of old—  
Who when the drummers beat the fields, obeyed  
    the drummer's call.  
His letters breathed a brighter hope than any she  
    had heard,  
Nor any hint he gave to her that for his fairest  
    youth,

Death leapt and chattered daily, and daily was  
 deterred  
 From staying all the transient mirth that  
 chased across his mouth

The mother thrilled with sense of beauty infinite .  
 For here it was the lithe strong arm had pressed  
 her to his breast,  
 While his proud mouth had sealed on hers the  
 proudest right  
 That lowly tenderness may plan in gardens of the  
 West.  
 And so the moon grew white to silver all the lawns,  
 While the garden wicket grows more white,  
 because a shadow near  
 Has come to steal the wakened joy of any further  
 dawns :  
 The hand upon the wicket trembles, and the vision  
 is not clear

Of the one being in the garden who stands so  
 quiet and still.  
 At last the shadow enters and knows a form has  
 sudden fled,  
 That now is lonely weeping upon a haunted hill—  
 For with it comes a company of France's hidden  
 dead .  
 Then, at the sound of feet, she turns, while her  
 heart has made such stir,



To make her grip her stick more close, and head  
     grow more erect :  
 She sees a priest's worn cassock, and priests are  
     sore to her—  
 For as a child she knew they moved where life's  
     best ships are wrecked.

"Madam,—your boy is dead," said he, with patient  
     glance :

"But he bade them say the lilies yet live strong  
     within the gale.

He died a hero's death, for honour, and for France !"  
 Then the mother faced and fixed his eyes, though  
     her cheeks were drawn and pale.

"I thank you for these words, for I see God spared  
     him speech

Before he died, and there are mothers for whom  
     no words atone

For speech of those they love, and whom no tidings  
     reach

I thank you, and now leave me, for I would be  
     alone."

And there she sits so quiet, in the light of the  
     young moon,

While the flowers are dead, and the fruits are  
     dead, along with the young life

That someone sped to the depth of our last dim lagoon,  
 While only the priest in the field of youth hears  
     the requiem gurgle ;

ERIC DICKINSON

And he knows that strife goes on, and on, for ever,  
on, and on ;  
And the harps of the world shall play no more,  
nor any more shall bring,  
The maids and youths to laughter, until that the end  
be won,  
And the eyes of men grow young again, and the  
heart of the world can sing  
(Oxford 1919).

*Chanticleer*  
(For Raja Rao)

Like a pall  
A December sky hangs low  
Over Soissons on Aisne  
Threatening snow-pictures  
Caught long ago mastery  
By Peter Breughel,  
Or Pol of Limburg \*  
In Soissons  
Chanticleer makes merry,  
Banding his rival with shrill articulation  
To tell us kings and popes are dead ;  
That only fussing little men  
Are busy making, and unmaking  
Treaties of no real account.

---

\* Two famous painters of the early Flemish School

In Soissons on Aisne  
 Between each brazen flourish  
 Of Chanticlere to Chanticlere,  
 The earth falls silent ;  
 A calm sleep prevails  
 Unwinking as the Christ  
 Of *St. Jean des Vignes*: \*  
 A breathless sleep of Nature's pause  
 In winter solstice  
 Biding the sap of Spring.

Here in this world of Chanticlere  
 And quiet serenity of Saints  
 The earth is still and there is peace :  
 Peace for all the dead  
 Who fell on *Montaigne de Paris*, †  
 Peace too, for all the hurried hosts  
 Of Flanders dead,  
 Where the women with soft eyes  
 Still keep their orisons  
 Before *Our Lady of Malines*, ‡  
 Finding sweet peace  
 Before the images of stone and wood :  
 For these are of the earth,  
 And love the earth,

---

\* A ruined abbey

† A high ridge commanding the town of Soissons. It exchanged hands more than once between the opposing forces during the War

‡ A highly venerated statue of the Madonna.

And simple hearts and simple things—  
And love—is peace.

Peace!—

What is that whinnying cough  
That breaks the silence now  
Defeating cock-sure Chanticleere  
And all unwinking saints?  
The *mitrailleuse*,\*  
The tramp of feet,  
The incontinent beating of a drum.  
A hoarse command,  
Ranks that break towards the *caserne*,  
In tumbling haste.

Shattered now the peace of Chanticleere,  
His kingdom hurled to bits,  
While all the stone battalions of saints  
Are down.  
Storm over Europe once again  
Bids men prepare, my Chanticleere,  
*Le Coq Gaulois*,†  
Who takes you for his *pomt-device*,‡  
Bids men go forth;  
Up there by the *caserne*,§  
DUTY,  
Blows imperiously at the lips of man

---

\* Machine gun.

† The French cock—symbol of the French spirit

‡ Scrupulously exact symbol, or device

§ Barracks

And soon about the Menin' Gate  
 What once was quick with loveliness  
 For quiet woman's pride,  
 Is blown to stench adown the wind—  
 And Christ is dead!

(Soissons, France, 1934)

## ERIC DICKINSON

On re-reading these poems separated by the gulf of years though they are, the same spirit appears to breathe in each, in this affair of mass depopulation of peoples those upon whom the brunt lies heaviest are the women, the agony of wife, the agony of mother. Almost it would seem today the Great War has brought no lesson with it, merrily as ever War goes on even as these lines are penned. Who can tell, whether we like it or not, one day we may all of us be brought into what is known as the *totalitarian fold*. Even while we applaud the efforts of Mr Aldous Huxley, Mr J B Priestley, Mr Cecil Day Lewis, and others, we are also, somewhat sceptic. Even *The League of Nations* the man in the street feels "has let him down." Mr Bertrand Russell (Lord Russell) points out—and perhaps justly—that, providing the propaganda is sufficiently subtle, we can all be got to fight in a few short weeks for what is demonstrably a —*Righteous Cause*.

The first poem was written in the cloistral airs of Oxford, the second was brought to light in the town of Soissons, near the Franco-Belgian frontier, a town that still bears upon its exquisite Gothic the scars of 1914. In Soissons, even in 1934 you could not take a walk into the summer charm of the Aisne valley without running the risk of being turned back—and why? "Monsieur," says the corporal, "you may not pass today. Another day perhaps! This afternoon monsieur, we give the air a little pouff with the *mitrailleuse*." Backwards we turn with dragging steps though the sun smiles after showers, and there are fresh windflowers in the valley.